HYPERTEXTUAL WAYS OF KNOWING: MAPPING THE INTERSECTIONS OF HYPERTEXT THEORY, FEMINIST EPISTEMOLOGY, AND FEMINIST RHETORIC

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To the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research:

I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Carlton L. Clark entitled "Hypertextual Ways of Knowing: Mapping the Intersections of Hypertext Theory, Feminist Epistemology, and Feminist Rhetoric." I have examined this dissertation for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of doctor of philosophy in Rhetoric.

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Hypertextual Ways of Knowing: Mapping the Intersections of Hypertext Theory, Feminist Epistemology and Feminist Rhetoric

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Abstract

This study demonstrates the convergence of three disciplinary fields: hypertext theory, feminist epistemology, and feminist rhetoric. My central thesis is that the conjunction of hypertext theory and feminist epistemology allows for a rearticulation of feminist rhetoric.

The core of this study consists of an analysis of five female-authored hypertexts, all of which were composed with Eastgate Systems' Storyspace hypertext-authoring software: two long hyperfictions, Carolyn Guyer's *Quibbling* (1992) and Shelley Jackson's *Patchwork Girl* (1995); two short hyperfictions, J. Yellowlees Douglas's "I Have Said Nothing" (1994) and Mary-Kim Arnold's "Lust" (1994); and Diane Greco's hypertext monograph *Cyborg: Engineering the Body Electric* (1995). The Storyspace read-write interface allows the user to intervene in the text, or to take on the role of reader-writer. Hence, I have used Storyspace's read-write interface to write my own text, consisting of commentary, analysis, and personal reflection, *within* each of these five hypertexts.

The major humanities-based hypertext theorists (e.g., George Landow, Richard Lanham, Jay David Bolter, Michael Joyce, J. Yellowlees Douglas, Johndan Johnson-Eilola) have each explained how hypertext functions, and they have articulated the ways

in which conventional text and hypertext differ. We now know that hypertext must be understood on its own terms, rather than as a simple extension or evolution of print. Yet, insofar as they have adhered to gender-neutral methodologies, the above-named scholars have left vast areas of hypertext theory and practice unmapped. Hence, by employing a feminist methodology, this study aims to take the scholarly discourse on humanities-based hypertext in a new direction.

A second strand of this study examines the implications of a feminist theorization of hypertext for composition pedagogy, as well as for higher education and contemporary discussions of literacy and new media. Thus, this study situates hypertext theory within the discursive contexts of feminist pedagogy and the institutional politics of American higher education.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1

Foundations for a Feminist Theorization of Literary Hypertext

In 1988, sociologist Dorothy Smith argued that women's lives are characterized by a "disjuncture between experience and the forms in which experience is socially expressed" (50). Admittedly, to speak of "women's lives" or "women's experience" elides differences along the axes of race, class, sexual orientation, age, and so forth. Nonetheless, if we temporarily bracket the univeralist assumptions of the term "women," Smith's statement has important implications for a feminist theorization of hypertext. Historically, in articulating their diverse perspectives and agendas, feminists have had to rely on traditional, masculinist modes of discourse (e.g., oratory and print publication). Insofar as they are overdetermined by an objectivist epistemology, conventional textual media and mainstream scholarly genres, such as the single-authored essay and the monograph, have also constrained feminist expression. Moreover, the major theorizations of hypertext have been articulated within the contexts of mainstream, masculinist epistemology and rhetoric.

In this three-pronged study, I argue for a convergence of the fields of hypertext theory, feminist epistemology, and feminist rhetoric, much like Richard Lanham, in focusing on digital technologies, argues for a convergence of social, technological, and theoretical pressures in higher education. I maintain that a feminist methodology, informed by feminist epistemology and feminist rhetoric, has the power to take hypertext

theory to the "next step." My central thesis, however, is that the conjunction of hypertext theory and feminist epistemology allows for a rearticulation of feminist rhetoric. A rearticulated feminist rhetoric, in turn, may serve to bridge the gap between experience and expression that Smith speaks of.[1]

The core of this study consists of an analysis of five female-authored hypertexts, all of which were composed with Eastgate Systems' Storyspace hypertext-authoring software: two long hyperfictions, Carolyn Guyer's *Quibbling* (1992) and Shelley Jackson's *Patchwork Girl* (1995); two short hyperfictions, J. Yellowlees Douglas's "I Have Said Nothing" (1994) and Mary-Kim Arnold's "Lust" (1994); and Diane Greco's hypertext monograph *Cyborg: Engineering the Body Electric* (1995). Thus, I have selected hypertexts authored by women, each of whom writes from a critical, feminist perspective.[2] That is, each of these authors, in her own way, appears to be invested in overturning the conventions of the print-based, Western literary canon.

One strategy for healing the disjunction between feminist experience and expression is for feminist readers to write themselves into the texts they read. Accordingly, I have used the read-write capability of Storyspace to write my own text, consisting of

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[1] I understand that, in the spirit of postmodernism and pluralism, it may be more appropriate to speak of hypertext theories, feminist epistemologies, and feminist rhetorics, as opposed to using those terms in the singular. Thus, rather than treating these complex, contested fields of inquiry as unitary abstractions, the plural suffix allows one to foreground the concrete, contextualized specificity of ways of thinking, constructing knowledge, communicating, and so forth. While singular terms tend to erase differences, I have nonetheless opted, for purely stylistic reasons, for the singular in most cases. I do use the plural forms on occasion, but unless I refer to a particular hypertext theory, a particular feminist epistemology, or a particular feminist rhetoric, the singular forms should be read as implying plurality as well.

[2] On further consideration, I am not certain that Douglas's "I Have Said Nothing" can be classified as a feminist text, although this is not to say that it is in any way anti-feminist. And, of course, it is amenable to a feminist reading.

commentary, analysis, and personal reflection, *within* each of the five hypertexts. While these hypertexts may be read without Storyspace in a read-only mode, Storyspace acts as an interface to allow the user to intervene in the text.[3] With Storyspace I am able to write myself into the text, as opposed to remaining on the outside looking in. Thus, the read-write capability of Storyspace allows the user to truly become a reader-writer, or *wreater.*[4] The significance of this textual intervention is elaborated later in this chapter and in subsequent chapters. As a logistical move, I have opted to store all five hypertexts, including my commentary, on a single rewritable compact disc.

The outline of this study is as follows. Chapter 1 contains the rationale for the study and a broad overview of hypertext theory, feminist epistemology, and feminist rhetoric. In Chapter 2, I argue that the conjunction of hypertext theory and feminist epistemology leads to a rearticulation of feminist rhetoric. In Chapter 3, I present and defend the methodology of the study, focusing closely on the methodological underpinning of the section composed with Storyspace. Chapter 4 consists of a discussion of the five hypertexts and a narrative-analytic reflection, which I will refer to henceforth as a "narranalysis" or the "narranalytic section," on the experience writing myself into these

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[3] The word *text* is often used in this study as a shorted form of *hypertext*. The rationale for this choice is that it lessens the binary opposition between print text and hypertext.

[4] In earlier drafts of this chapter I used the words "wreader" and "wreading" to signify the blurring of the reader/writer distinction in hypertext. I took these neologisms from Pamela K. Gilbert's "Meditations of Hypertext: A Rhetorethics for Cyborgs" (262). Gilbert states that she does not know who coined these terms. I have now decided, however, to change the *d* to a *t* because I believe *wreater* and *wreating* more effectively capture the sense of reading and writing as overlapping, inextricable activities. Additionally, when spoken, "wreader" and "wreading" cannot be distinguished from reader and reading. I use the terms *reader*, *reader-writer*, and *wreater* interchangeably. As much as possible, though, I have opted for *wreater*.

texts.[5] In Chapter 5, I discuss the implications of the study for composition pedagogy. Finally, in Chapter 6, a short chapter, I sum up my principle arguments and draw conclusions. The hypertext section may be read at any point, though I suggest that it be read between Chapters 3 and 4.

Background for a Feminist Hypertext Theory

When surveying the short history of hypertext, four names stand out: Vannevar Bush, Theodor Holm (Ted) Nelson, Tim Berners-Lee, and Marc Andreessen.[6] In his 1945 *Atlantic Monthly* article, "As We May Think," Bush described his vision of the memex:

> Consider a future device for individual use, which is a sort of mechanized private file and library. It needs a name, and, to coin one at random, "memex" will do. A memex is a device in which an individual stores all his books, records, and communications, and which is mechanized so that it may be consulted with

[5] As far as I know, the term "narranalysis" has not been used before, although I would not be surprised to learn that I am not the originator of this term. This term appeals to me because it allows me to get past binaristic logic.

[6] Additionally, several researchers have been credited with playing major roles in the development of the pre-World Wide Web Internet, or ARPANET. Among this group are J.C.R Licklider, Larry Roberts, Bob Taylor, Paul Baran, Donald Davies, Douglas Engelbart, Frank Heart, Len Kleinrock, Vint Cerf, Will Crowther, and Bob Kahn—all men. Since the core of this study is based on five stand-alone literary hypertexts, I will not devote much attention to the history of the Internet. The work of Berners-Lee and Andreessen, by contrast, deals directly with hypertext. It is important to understand that the Internet is not in itself hypertextual, although the distributed network of nodes and links is analogous to hypertext. For a history of the ARPANET, see Kati Hafner and Matthew Lyon. *Where Wizards Stay Up Late: The Origins of the Internet*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996.

exceeding speed and flexibility. It is an enlarged intimate supplement to his memory. (106)

Bush's memex, then, was to be memory aid—an information storage and retrieval technology much like a book, but exponentially larger and organized associationally rather than in a hierarchical-unilinear manner. In 1965, Ted Nelson, who was directly inspired by Bush, coined the term "hypertext" for the concept of an associational, or nonhierarchical, document organization system. Nelson coined the term "hypermedia" as well. Nelson's Project Xanadu, which was effectively superseded in 1990 by the World Wide Web, was to revolutionize document publishing and copyright law (Nelson).[7] The code for Nelson's still-unrealized Project Xanadu was made open source in 1999 (Griffin, unpaginated).

Prior to the World Wide Web, hypertext had existed only in self-contained form, such as Apple Computer's HyperCard, Brown University's Intermedia, and early iterations of Storyspace. But in 1989, Tim Berners-Lee, a researcher at CERN in Switzerland, proposed "a distributed hypertext system" as a global information management system for scientists at CERN and across the globe.[8] Tentatively called "Mesh," Berners-Lee changed the name to "World Wide Web" when he wrote the actual code in 1990. The WWW came online in 1990 in its text-based, *Lynx* form. Three years later, Marc Andreessen created *Mosaic*, the first Web browser to integrate graphics with

[7] My source for Ted Nelson's views on hypertext is Nelson's homepage: http://www.sfc.keio.ac.jp/~ted/. Accessed 22 Jan 02. Nelson recently moved his homepage to ted.hyperland.com. As of July 19 2002, this site appears to be still under construction.

[8] CERN is the European Organization for Nuclear Research; they are located online at http://public.web.cern.ch/Public/. Accessed 19 July 2002.

alphanumeric text, and, with the aid of Andreessen's University of Illinois colleagues, *Mosaic* soon evolved into *Netscape* (Bolter 40; Griffin, unpaginated).

The first two major works of humanities-based hypertext theory were Jay David Bolter's *Writing Space* (1990/revised 2001) and George P. Landow's *Hypertext* (1992), revised as *Hypertext 2.0* (1997). Although Landow presents hypertext, for the most part, as a tool to make postmodern, academic literary studies more efficient, his most insightful remarks have to do with the radical transformation of print-based scholarship and copyright principles. Bolter's *Writing Space*, unlike Landow's work, is not wedded to the "discourse of efficiency" (Johnson-Eilola 85), yet Bolter maintains a gender-neutral stance and an objectivist methodology. Among others working in hypertext theory, Espen Aarseth, Johndan Johnson-Eilola, and Silvio Gaggi have made substantial contributions; yet none of these scholars have departed significantly from the gender-neutral standards of print-era scholarship. Michael Joyce's two essay collections, *Of Two Minds* and *Othermindedness*, are innovative and quite provocative, and they even touch on feminist issues. Joyce's primary concern, however, is hypertext poetics, rather than feminist epistemology or feminist rhetoric. Over the last decade, several journal articles sketching out feminist theorizations of hypertext have been published (e.g., Gilbert, Page, Sullivan, LeCourt & Barnes, Haronian), but no book-length studies have yet appeared. The most important recent work on hypertext theory written by a woman, J. Yellowlees Douglas's *The End of Books—Or Books Without End*, is not a feminist study but an analysis of literary hypertext from the perspectives of narratology reader-response theory.

In this study, I work within gaps of the above texts. The major theorists on hypertext have each articulated the ways which conventional text and hypertext differ, and we now know that hypertext must be understood on its own terms, rather than as an extension or evolution of print. Yet, insofar as they have adhered to a gender-neutral methodology, the above-named scholars have left vast areas of hypertext experience unmapped. Hence, it is now time to take this project in a new direction by articulating a feminist theorization of hypertext. To this end, I depart from conventional practice by inquiring into the relationships between hypertext and people—specifically, people who read and write literary hypertext. This study, in other words, does not compare and contrast two different textual media but examines my own interactions with hypertext.

Literary hypertext represents a form of discourse—multivocal, multiperspectival, nonhierarchical—that has been suppressed throughout Western history, particularly since the mid-seventeenth-century initiation of the Enlightenment project, also known as modernism.[9] Thus, I maintain that a feminist theorization of hypertext, founded on the tenets of feminist epistemology, may contribute to the project of integrating feminist experience and expression, or healing the disjunction Smith speaks of.

The Enlightenment project, which many feminist scholars (e.g., Bordo, Code, Keller, Harding, Tanesini) have characterized as androcentric and misogynistic, was founded on an objectivist epistemology that places human beings in the position of detached knowers or investigators of an objective world. This tradition also rests on a reverence for

[9] Enlightenment modernism must be distinguished from the early-twentieth-century artistic movement known as Modernism.

unilinearity, singular narratives, and hierarchy. The attraction of hypertext, for many contemporary writers, critics, and scholars (e.g., Page, Haronian, Greco, Guyer), is that it disrupts, subverts, and decenters this cluster of mainstream assumptions. Hypertext theory may be thought of detecting a gap in mainstream Western thought and sliding it open wide enough for historically suppressed ontologies, epistemologies, and rhetorics to take hold and thrive. And the prospect of the liberation of suppressed ways of being, knowing, and communicating is likely to be appealing not just to feminists, but to persons inhabiting marginalized positions of every sort.

Any time there is a disjunction, or gap, between accepted theory and experience, an *aporia* (i.e., a sense of puzzlement or cognitive dissonance), arises, and a new theoretical move is needed to resolve the aporetic experience (Aarseth 125). Hence, one of the main research problems that I address in this study is the gap between current humanities-based hypertext theory and hypertext experience, particularly hypertext as experienced by feminists. While a few feminist hypertext theorists have begun to work within this gap, a great deal of work remains to be done before we have a significant understanding of the experience of reading and writing hypertext.

As a final prefatory comment, I must acknowledge up at the outset my own epistemic location as a male feminist. I am well aware that a feminist argument made by a male—particularly a white, relatively privileged male—may be deemed theoretically incoherent, illogically, or contradictory; however, such contradictions are to be expected in a contradictory world, especially in a world undergoing such rapid change at the dawn

of the twenty-first century. As Sandra Harding writes, from a theoretical perspective, "tensions, contradictions, and ambivalences within and between theories are not always bad. Coherent theories in an obviously incoherent world are either silly and uninteresting or oppressive and problematic, depending on the degree of hegemony they manage to achieve" (164). From another perspective, however, there is nothing especially contradictory about a man wanting to end the oppression of half of the world's population. As a number of male feminists (e.g., Tom Digby, Harry Brod, Brian Pronger,) have observed, many men see gender justice as a *moral imperative* very much like racial and economic justice. Furthermore, as Patrick D. Hopkins agues in an essay included in Digby's *Men Doing Feminism* collection, gender itself a *learned performance*, not a property possessed by virtue of biology (37-41).[10] Hence, rather than differentiating between women's ways of knowing and men's ways of knowing, we may speak of *cultural way of knowing*—that is, ways of knowing, or epistemologies, inculcated within specific social contexts. Although, in the mainstream West, certain ways of knowing, which I will elaborate in the course of this study, have historically been identified with women, these "feminine" epistemologies are also evident in many traditional, non-western, or indigenous cultures—cultures obviously composed of women and men; therefore, feminism may be practiced women and men. My epistemic location is complex, partial, and in many ways contradictory, and while I, like anyone else,

[10] I realize that many feminists, perhaps most notably Judith Butler, have made this argument. Hopkins cites Butler's *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. New York: Routledge, 1990.

undoubtedly have substantial blind spots, my own unique mixture of blindness and insight may allow for a productive feminist theorization of hypertext.

The remainder of this chapter is divided into three broad sections wherein I review the scholarly literature on hypertext theory, feminist epistemology, and feminist rhetoric. Within these three sections, I also begin to articulate my own feminist theorization of hypertext.

Hypertext Theory

Hypertext may be described as topical as well as topographic, based on the fact that it consists of a network of textual "places" (i.e., topics, Gk. *topoi*). Bolter writes that "hypertext consists of topics and their connections, where the topics may be paragraphs, sentences, individual words, or indeed digitized graphics and segments of video" (35). While all prose works all topical, in order to be characterized as topographic a text must be amenable to a coherent, meaningful reading in many different orders. In other words, topographic texts do not have predetermined, or default, reading paths. Textual topics, or *topoi*, have also been referred to as lexias, following the usage of Roland Barthes in *S-Z*.

Topical texts, by contrast with topographic texts, usually follow a sequential or serial format—that is, topical texts do have default readings. Topographical texts may be distinguished by their associational character; readers are encouraged to make associational links across the texts and read "out of order." Hence, we might substitute the words "serial" and "associational" for topical and topographic. This alternate terminology is appealing to me personally because I wish to distance myself from the

traditional spatial metaphors that have been applied to hypertext. While a hypertext may be visualized topographically or even observed with the graphic views offered by Storyspace, the text itself is read one lexia at a time—that is, unlike with print or even most electronic texts, the reader cannot quickly skim or scroll through a hypertext because it only appears on the computer monitor in chunks or pieces. Although a Storyspace hypertext may be observed and studied synchronically on a map, tree map, or outline view, it is actually read diachronically, or in time. Thus, rather than privileging space, I seek to articulate an understanding of hypertext that accounts for space and time, or space-time. I argue this point in depth later in this chapter and in subsequent chapters.

Topographic text is far from new. Since the invention of the printing press in the mid-15th century, the conventional text has featured a spatial, or topographic, organization designed to optimize nonlinear information access (Corns 96-100). The typical nonfiction prose text is organized topographically—with titles, chapter headings, subheadings, and indices, as well as standard indentions, margins, gutters, and so on. Topographic page layout is now intuitive—that is, hardly noticed. By contrast, pre-print manuscripts were far less topographically sophisticated or reader-friendly. As Walter Ong has observed, manuscripts were not easy to read. For instance, relocating information, or reading recursively, was not encouraged by the page layout (119). Earlier still, the scroll followed a strictly serial format, thus imitating speech; only with great difficulty could a reader skip around in a scroll, or read topographically. Among contemporary texts, the novel is a special case, inasmuch as it lacks a subject index, as well as, in most cases, subheadings and similar "navigational" markers. Of course, the

conventional novel—in contrast to a topographic novel such as Nabokov's *Pale Fire*—is designed to be read serially; yet even novels usually feature chapter headings, making these texts amenable to non-serial or associational reading. It would be a mistake, then, to classify conventional print text and hypertext as topical and topographic, respectively. Thus, given the greater precision of the terms *serial* and *associational*—along with my bias against spatial metaphors—in most cases I will employ these terms rather than follow Bolter's use of the terms *topical* and *topographic*.

Furthermore, inasmuch as hypertext may be expressed in both digital form and in print media, it should not be considered in opposition to print. For, as a number of critics (e.g., Landow, Bolter, Joyce, Aarseth, Hayles) have demonstrated, print texts can be quite hypertextual (e.g., Jacques Derrida's *Glas*, Roland Barthes' *S-Z*), whereas a text published on the World Wide Web may not necessarily be hypertextual. Joyce goes so far as to claim, somewhat controversially, that "the web is more hierarchical than hypertextual" (*Othermindedness* 52). Nelson has made similar comments on the World Wide Web, claiming, in short, that the Web is hierarchical rather than, as Nelson's would have it, parallel (Nelson, unpaginated). As far are as possible, then, I avoid the hypertext/print false dichotomy. In brief, I define hypertext in opposition to conventional (i.e., nonhypertextual) text, rather than in opposition to print.

Moreover, I focus for the most part on *literary* hypertext, by which I mean hypertext narrative, also known as hyperfiction. I have not undertaken a study of hypertext in general, which would encompass "functional hypertext" (e.g., word processor help files, databases, commercial websites, discussion lists, etc.) and various multimedia

applications. I must note that Greco's *Cyborg: Engineering the Body Electric* is not a hyperfiction, but a nonfiction scholarly work, or what I have called a "hypertext monograph." Yet, the simple fact that *Cyborg* is a hypertext lends it a sense of *literariness* that is foreign to the conventional monograph; that is to say, conventional nonfiction strives for transparency, as the "content," rather than "form," is foregrounded; whereas in nonfiction hypertext both form and content are of interest, although form is often privileged over content. As the Russian formalists argued early in the twentieth century, a literary text is of interest for its language, not merely for the information transmitted; literary language is not a transparent medium, but is characterized by various levels of opacity. The hypertext medium falls on the opaque end of a transparency/opacity spectrum; therefore, hypertext tends to make even a scholarly monograph literary. I will have more to say on the transparency/opacity spectrum in chapter three.

The form/content binary itself belongs to the domain of print; it is founded on the "conduit" model of communication, which assumes that information, or content, is packaged and travels across a conduit, or medium, from source to destination (Lakoff and Johnson 10-13). On this view, information is the content packaged in language or between the covers a book. But such outmoded, mechanistic thinking does not even describe conventional text adequately, and it definitely does not fit hypertext; therefore, to divide texts between literary and nonliterary, on the assumption that literary texts focus on form as well as content and nonliterary texts privilege content, perpetuates a false

dichotomy. Thus, I am comfortable including Greco's nonfiction work in a study of literary hypertext.

At this point, drawing on post-structuralism and reader-response theory, I wish to make a distinction between two terms: *work* and *text*. I define the *work* as the copyrighted material artifact produced by the author, the publisher, and the printer. The *text* may be defined as the moment-to-moment instantiation of the text in the act of reading. According to Roland Barthes, "the work can be seen (in bookshops, in catalogues, in exam syllabi), the text is a process of demonstration [. . .] the work can be held in the hand, the text is held in language" (901). In the text, writing and reading come together, or as Barthes writes, "the text requires that one try to abolish (or at least try to diminish) the distance between writing and reading" (904). The reading process may even be construed as an act of *writing*, in the sense that to interpret a text is to *write* it, as least in one's imagination. Stanley Fish claims that texts change "not because they are being read differently, but because they are being written differently" (989). That is to say, texts are written, in a hermeneutic sense, by the reader.

But as the parenthetic statement in the second quote from Barthes suggests, the distance between reading and writing cannot be entirely eliminated. As Reed Way Dasenbrock has argued, Fish goes too far in conflating reading and writing. To insist on the power of readers to *write* the texts they read is to impose the beliefs and values of the reader onto the text, as opposed to listening carefully to and engaging with the text. What the imposition of the reader's will on the text amounts to is that the *otherness* of the text is not respected; the reader interprets the text according to a pre-existing interpretive

frame, rather than listening carefully to what the text has to say (Dasenbrock 244). Thus, the conflation of reading and writing is revealed as a thoroughly masculinist ideal.

I prefer the metaphor of reading as *performance*, as in the performance of a musical score. A musician is not free to interpret a composer's score any way she[11] chooses, even if the musician has learned her skills within an interpretive community.[12] One note cannot be freely exchanged for another, particularly if the musician is a member of an orchestra. We may also compare the act of reading to an actor's performance, or interpretation, of a playwright's script. The words on the page cannot be interpreted according to the whims of a particular school of actors or interpretive community. The reader/performer is under an obligation, based on a contract freely entered into, to perform the script as written. Of course, some "artistic license" of acceptable, and all dramatic interpretations, like all readings of a poem or novel, will differ to some extent, yet these differences do not negate the words on the page—and the words on the page are what I am calling the *work*. In constructing a text, then, the reader enters into a *relationship* with a writer's work, and neither party is free to dominate the relationship.

There appears to be a space, or gap, between the work and the reader where the text *comes into being*. Wolfgang Iser refers to this space as the "virtual dimension of the

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[11] Inasmuch as this is a feminist study, I have opted in most cases to use a feminine pronoun when a "nonsexist" or "gender-neutral" language might be expected.

[12] Fish is on more solid ground when he discusses interpretive communities, arguing that texts are interpreted, or read/written according to community-based standards, or interpretive strategies. Texts are constituted by interpretive communities (i.e., readers who have learned similar interpretive strategies), and each interpretive community "perceives the text (or texts) its interpretive strategies demand and call into being" (Fish 989).

text," and he argues that the text "arises from the meeting between the written text [or work] and the individual mind of the reader" (Iser 958, 962). The relationship between the reader and the work develops in this in-between space, and the text is constituted by this relationship. The text, in other words, is intangible; it is function of interpretation.

In sum, despite my criticism of the notion of the reader "writing" the text, I find the distinction between work and text quite helpful with respect to hypertext. Hence, I refer to published hypertexts (e.g., Carolyn Guyer's *Quibbling,* Mary-Kim Arnold's "Lust," etc.) as *works*, and I refer to readings, or instantiations, of those works as *texts*. If a hypertextual work, like a conventional work, is to manifest as a text, it must be instantiated as such by a particular reader; however, the difference between a hypertext and a conventional work is that a hypertext must be instantiated in order to exist as anything other than computer code. An unread book still exists as tangible object. I draw a distinction, then, between the hypertextual *work* as it exists in coded form, or *in potentia*, and the *text* realized by a reader. I explore the fine points of this claim in later chapters.

This terminological issue gets slightly more complex when it comes to the "blurring of the boundaries between reading and writing" (Landow 4). A read-write hypertext interface such as Storyspace allows the reader to edit text, write new text, add and delete links, and change the hypertext on a structural level. This type of textual intervention goes well beyond "writing" the text in a hermeneutic sense. Nevertheless, in such cases I will still treat what the wreater creates as a *text* rather than a work. I will reserve the term *work* for the artifact that is published and protected by copyright law, even though the

hypertext work is essentially computer code. Again, I articulate the fine points of this argument more fully in a later chapter.

Works and texts differ according to other standards as well. To recapitulate a point made earlier, a hypertext consists of topics and links. Conventional literary works, however, also consist of topics and links—not hyperlinks, but links nonetheless. To quote Bolter again, "topics may be paragraphs, sentences, individual words" (35). Links in conventional text take the form of transitions and headings, rather than hyperlinks. While all prose *works* are topical, one may read a *text* topographically by making associational links (i.e., links *across* the text and into other texts), rather than merely following the linear transitions. Readers create intertextuality by making associational links across texts, whereas making associational links within a text creates intratextuality. Thus, while the *work* is invariably topical, the *text* (that is, the work as read) tends to be topographic due to the associational character of reading.

It would most likely be extremely difficult to find a reader who reads in a strictly serial manner, or never reads a text "out of order." While conventional works of fiction, like hyperfictions, are written as linked *topoi*, most authors of print-based fiction do their best to see that their works are read serially. In a conventional literary work the links, or transitions, between sentences, paragraphs, pages, and chapters are determinate, that is, fixed in a definite context or sequence by the author. Writers of non-fiction, on the other hand, often compromise between serial and associational, or topographic, organization. Heading, subheadings, footnotes, endnotes, indices, and so forth are associational features.

While serial text enforces a singular, or unilinear, path through a text, associational text offers multiple paths, or what amounts to "readings" rather than texts (Bolter 125). Thus, rather than merely following linear, transitional links, reading a hypertext entails making choices between various reading paths. Accordingly, Joyce has defined hypertext as "reading and writing in an order you choose where the choices you make change the nature of what you read or write" (*Othermindedness* 38). Hypertext, then, embodies the postmodern principle of the *text*—that is, the text as constructed by the reader. As Iser claims, modern [and postmodern] literary texts "are often so fragmentary that one's attention is almost exclusively occupied with the search for connections between the fragments" (959). The object of the reading process then becomes to "make us aware of aware of our own capacity for providing links" (Iser 959).

Most theorists and commentators on hypertext have insisted on the associational character of hypertext. Vannevar Bush, in discussing his vision of the memex, referred to "associative indexing, the basic idea of which is a provision whereby any item may be caused at will to select immediately and automatically another" (107). In Bush's memex, associational indexing (i.e., linking *across,* or horizontally and diagonally) was to supplant hierarchical (i.e., vertical) indexing, and although the memex was never built, the concept of associational indexing was eventually embodied in hypertext.

Espen Aarseth uses the term *ergodic* to refer to the user-participation called for by hypertext and other "interactive" media. While, of course, even conventional texts require reader participation in the form of linguistic decoding, the visual scanning of text, retaining text in memory, and physically holding the text and turning the pages, ergodic

texts require (rather than merely *invite*) the additional action of selecting links between nodes. The primary distinguishing feature of hypertext is that the reader, or wreater, instantiates a text through the choices she makes in selecting links between nodes. The hypertext author writes many potential texts, and the reader must instantiate, or actualize, a particular text by assembling the textual fragments the author has provided. Without the wreater's participation, the text remains a mere potentiality.

To extend on comments made previously, a hypertext must be *performed* by the wreater in time as well as space. The *work* can exist for the most part in space, as an object on a shelf, but the *text* is realized in space and time. The pages, lexias, or topics of a text exist in a spatial dimension; therefore, texts are *experienced* in space and time—this is true for conventional text and hypertext. Experiential, or lived, reality is spatial and temporal.

The instantiation of a hypertext, however, goes beyond what is called for with conventional text. Douglas asserts that "hypertext has more in common with dance that it has with novels [. . .]. Until a reader assembles it, performing it, the text exists only as a set of potential motions, a sequence of steps and maneuvers that become actualized only at the instant that the reader selects a segment of text or fulfills a condition for movement" (*EOB* 31).[13] Again, conventional literary works as well as hypertexts are instantiated by the reader, and texts must be instantiated in time as well as space; that is to say, the temporal dimension is integral to the process of realizing, or actualizing, a

[13] *EOB* stand for J. Yellowlees Douglas's *The End of Books—or Books Without End.*

text. As Fish claims, "Everything depends on the temporal dimension" (983). Similarly, Iser writes, "In every text there is a potential time sequence which the reader must inevitably realize, as it is impossible to absorb even a short text in a single moment" (960). I will have more to say on the subject of time and space in subsequent chapters. For now, the point Douglas, Aarseth, and other hypertext theorists make regarding reader participation or the performance of the text is that hypertext requires reader participation *above and beyond* what the conventional text calls for. Again, without reader participation, hypertext remains mere computer code.

The Living Text

In what will likely be construed by some as a radical proposal, I maintain that a hypertext, or an instantiation of a hypertextual work, is best conceptualized metaphorically as a "living organism," and I draw on the resources of feminist epistemology to substantiate this claim. Hypertext, with its mutable, dynamic, unstable nature, is analogous to a living organism, and living organisms cannot be known, at least not deeply or ethically, as objects. As feminist epistemologist Lorraine Code writes, "Knowledge, as the [objectivist] tradition defines it, is *of* objects; only by assimilating people to objects can we hope to know them" (*RS* 52). In proposing the metaphor of hypertext as a living organism, I am explicitly rejecting the conventional spatial metaphor of hypertext as landscape, which Pamela Gilbert has associated with masculinist, colonial narratives (258).

The primary limitation of spatial, geographic, topographic, or cartographic

metaphors is that space-time (not just space) moves; that is to say, the background of our lives, which is inseparable from ourselves, is in constant motion; it doesn't stand still as we move through it or over it. One's experience of space-time is relational, and insofar as one's relationships with others (animate and inanimate) are in flux, space-time moves. Discourses, the objects of rhetorical and literary scholarship, are also in constant motion, and shifting discursive terrains cannot be mapped—or only very tentatively mapped. Of course, hypertext space (or hyperspace) moves, too. Again, Douglas's dance metaphor is appropriate. One way the movement of hypertext space is manifested is through a writer's use of the Storyspace guard fields. For example, the default link from lexia 1 may go to lexia 2, but after the reader has gone from lexia 1 to 2 once the default link can change to lexia 3. In this case reader expects to hit enter and go once again from lexia 1 to lexia 2, but she is surprised to find herself at lexia 3 instead. Hence, the reading path or text moves somewhat like tectonic plates shifting under one's feet. I return to this theme of mobile, shifting space later in this study. For example in chapter 3, in the context of a discussion of Cubist painting, I cite art critic John Berger's statement that the "Cubists were concerned with movement and wanted to prove that space itself was a process" (*Toward Reality* 102). For now, though, I must flesh out the metaphor of hypertext as a living organism.

Hypertext space moves like a living organism. An intriguing methodological example, which I have followed in this study, was set by the late American geneticist and Nobel laureate, Barbara McClintock (1902-92), who is known for her belief in cultivating a "feeling for the organism," which may be a chromosome, a cell, a kernel of corn, or any

other entity. In cultivating this feeling, McClintock transgressed the conventional scientific boundaries between subject and object. For instance, in discussing her groundbreaking work in genetic transposition, the process by which genes transfer their positions on chromosomes, McClintock referred to the chromosomes under her microscope as "friends." As she reported to Evelyn Fox Keller, her biographer, "'when I was working with them I wasn't outside, I was down there. I was part of the system [. . .]. I actually felt like I was down there and these were my friends'" (*A Feeling*, 165). Keller explains that the "crucial point for us is that McClintock can risk the suspension of boundaries between subject and object without jeopardy to science precisely because, to her, science is not premised on that division. Indeed, the intimacy she experiences with the objects she studies [. . .] is a wellspring of her powers as a scientist" (164).

In what may be seen as a convergence with the organic thinking practiced by McClintock, the field of Artificial Life ("AL" or "Alife") offers a perspective on computer systems as living organisms, or self-contained, ecological systems—even "universes." According to Anthony Liekens,

> Artificial life is the name given to a new discipline that studies 'natural' life by attempting to recreate biological phenomena from scratch within computers and other 'artificial' media. Alife complements the traditional analytic approach of traditional biology with a synthetic approach in which, rather than studying biological phenomena by taking apart living organisms to see how they work, one attempts to put together systems that behave like living organisms.

I have opted to follow a similar synthetic approach in this study of hypertext. However, while Artificial Life researchers claim to have created actual living organisms inside computers, I use the term "living organism" in a different sense. In brief, I do not claim that a text "lives" as an autonomous, separate entity; it lives only in relation to a reader, just as people live genuinely as human beings only insofar as they are engaged in relationships with others—other people, nonhuman life forms, information technologies, and so on. Again, without a reader to instantiate it, a text is not a text; it is just a work.

Here I draw heavily on the work of N. Katherine Hayles, who writes, "Beginning with relation rather than pre-existing entities changes everything" ("FM" 3).[14] Such a *relational* ontology differs radically from the ontology of liberal humanism, which is premised on individuality, autonomy, objective distance, and so forth. Hayles argues, "We do not exist in order to relate; rather, we relate in order that we may exist as fully realized human beings" (31). Additionally, on the user side, the reader of a hypertext operates through an "extended mind," or a process of "distributed cognition," a condition in which the ego boundary of the skin breaks down (Hayles 7-8). On this view, "cognition is a systemic activity distributed throughout the environment and actuated by a variety of factors, only some of whom are humans." Hence, as the hypertext wreater begins to construct patterns in what is initially experienced as the randomness of a text, her mind extends into that text.

[14] Henceforth, I will abbreviate Hayles "Flesh and Metal: Reconfiguring the Mindbody in Virtual Environment" as "FM" and "Virtual Bodies and Flickering Signifiers" as "VB."

A distinction must be drawn at this point between *the body* and *embodiment*. According to Hayles, "The body is the human form seen from without, from a cultural perspective striving to make representations that can stand in for bodies in general. Embodiment is experienced from the inside, from the feelings, emotions and sensations that constitute the vibrant living textures of our lives" ("FM" 2). Although Hayles transcends the body/embodiment binary with the concept of the "mindbody," a concept I will return to later, the distinction between the body and embodiment remains theoretically productive. In brief, the experience of the extended mind, or the wreater's sense of inhabiting the text, may be understood as a different type of embodiment—a *virtual embodiment* (Hayles, "VB" 91). Donna Haraway also writes, "Feminist embodiment [. . .] is not about fixed locations in a reified body, female or otherwise, but about nodes in fields, inflections in orientations, and responsibility for difference in material-semiotic fields of meaning" (195).

In focusing on the human-machine interaction, or feedback loop, what emerges is a vision of a *cyborg literacy*—i.e., the reading and writing practices of a "cybernetic organism, a hybrid of machine and organism" (Haraway 149). The human user and the hypertext function together through a cybernetic feedback loop (Hayles, "FM" 5, 8), with the user changing the text and the text changing the user—and it is in this sense that I claim that a hypertext is a living organism. In cyborg literacy, we move from the one-way information flow that characterizes the conduit model of communication to a two-way, reciprocal relation. As a cybernetic system, "the impact of information technologies on the mindbody is always understood as a two-way relation, a feedback loop between

biologically-evolved capabilities and a richly engineered technological environment" (Hayles, "FM" 8). The life of a text, then, is a product or function of "relationality"; no text lives as a separate, autonomous entity.[15]

Treating a text as a living organism is not such as novel idea as one might at first suspect. Object relations theorists, such as Nancy Chodorow and Jane Flax, have argued that women's productive and reproductive labor leads them to relate to other things or entities in the world as living beings, rather than as the "dead" objects featured in mainstream science and epistemology (Harding 147). Again, if we bracket the universalist assumptions the word "women," object relations theory is relevant to a feminist theorization of hypertext, insofar as it suggests an experiential basis for treating a text a living organism.

Of course, such a relational, organic perspective is not restricted to women or to even to feminists. The metaphorical construction of artistic creation as a process of giving birth is quite familiar, and probably quite ancient. Poets, novelists, and artists—women and men—often speak of creative projects in terms of gestation and birth. Ideas and projects may *conceived* in a flash of insight or inspiration; then the work is nurtured and protected until it is ready to be released into the world to stand on its own two feet before an audience of friends, patrons, fans, critics, and outright enemies.

Thinking of the text as a living organism takes us back to a worldview that has been labeled, variously, pre-industrial, pre-mechanical, pre-modern, pre-Enlightenment, or

[15] Hayles uses the term "relationality" on page 8 of "Flesh and Metal." The term essentially means that entities must be understood in terms of their relations, rather than as isolated, autonomous units.

pre-seventeenth-century. Susan Bordo speaks of the Cartesian "intellectual *flight* from the female cosmos and the 'feminine' orientation toward the world." Bordo claims that while the feminine orientation "had still played a formidable role in medieval and Renaissance culture," in "the seventeenth century, it was decisively purged from the dominant intellectual culture, through the Cartesian [. . .] restructuring of knowledge and the world as masculine" (641). Considered in this historical context, the text as a dead object to be pinned down and dissected may be recognized as a masculinist, modernist construction.

A possible argument against this methodology is that treating the text as a living organism is a projection, as if we are simply creating the text in our own image; however, an often unrecognized fact is that the objectivist paradigm is also a projection—a projection of the autonomous, distanced, masculine ego (Keller, *Reflections* 69-70, 79). The connection with hypertext theory is that the conventional literary work, which, in the New Critical orthodoxy of the mid-twentieth century, is inviolate, unified, and separate from both author and reader, may well be a projection of the fully individuated, autonomous, objectivist, modernist man. According to this paradigm,

> [T]he relation specified between knower and known is one of distance and separation. It is that between a subject and an object radically divided [. . .]. Masculine here connotes, as it so often does, autonomy, separation, and distance. It connotes a radical rejection of any commingling of subject and object, which are, it now appears, quite identified as male and female. (Keller 79)

We may choose, then, between a masculinist projection and a feminist projection. The former yields a separate, autonomous text, while the latter yield a living, connected text. Whether we choose one of these two projections or some other projection, the projection itself is unavoidable.

First-Generation Hypertext

The five hypertexts I have selected for this study were published between 1992 and 1995. In one sense, this is an historical study, even though it definitely looks toward the future of rhetoric and composition theory. These five hypertexts may be classified as "first-generation" hypertexts, inasmuch as they were all published in the first half of the 1990s. These are *text-rich* hypertexts, meaning that the graphics and multimedia features are quite limited in comparison to hypertexts published since 1996. Although one can find graphics among first-generation hypertexts, and they are usually quite integral to the work, among the hypertexts I've chosen, the most notable in terms of graphics is *Patchwork Girl.* Stuart Moulthrop's 1991 hypertext *Victory Garden* also uses graphics quite innovatively and effectively. Nevertheless, first-generation hypertext remains primarily alphanumeric text, and as such it does not represent a radical break from conventional literature. The transition between conventional text and hypertext is actually rather smooth and even somewhat conservative. The text still consists of relatively familiar-looking, rectangular "pages" of alphanumeric text with few graphics or multimedia. The main difference is that the pages, or lexias, are organized as a dispersed,

hyperlinked network. Also, insofar as the text can be read coherently in various sequences or directions, the links are indeterminate.

By focusing on text-rich, first-generation hypertexts, I do not mean to imply that the graphical or visual experience is unimportant even in a completely alphanumeric text, far from it. One merely has to consider the word *topographic* to be reminded of the intensely visual nature of hypertext. A network of lexias may be visualized mentally. Or in a textual environment like Storyspace the four graphical representations of the structure of the text (i.e., map view, treemap view, chart view, and outline view) may be consulted (See Figures 1.1-1.3). These views each compliment the text view, offering important cues for reading the text.

Storyspaces's four graphical views compensate for the linear arrangement of alphanumeric text, for even multilinear hypertext is, after all, linear; it is not "nonlinear," as some commentators have suggested. Graphical representations of textual structure allow readers and writers to move between whole and part in the manner of the hermeneutic circle. When the integrated whole, or *gestalt*, is perceived, the parts often fall easily into place. Likewise, when the parts and the links between them are seen, the whole may be comprehended. However, one must be careful in speaking of the "whole text" in reference to a hypertext. Any wholes perceived or constructed are tentative at best because the hypertext medium tends to break wholes into fragments.

Text-rich hypertexts have been advocated as the antidote for the current "post-literate," multimedia culture. In 1988 Joyce stated that "hypertext is the word's revenge

on TV" (*OTM* 47).[16] Text-rich hypertext, in other words, counters the iconic medium of television. Elsewhere Joyce wrote, "I put my trust in words. Media seers may talk about how we won't need stories since we will have new, virtual worlds, but soon these new worlds, too, will have their own stories and we will long for new words to put them into" (*Othermindedness* 184). In other words, while narrative is at home in an alphanumeric text, television and film often struggle to match the narrative nuance of a text-rich medium.

With regard to writing pedagogy, in the not too distant future hypertextual multimedia will likely encroach further into the space traditionally occupied by alphanumeric text, and this movement will be reflected in mainstream composition theory and practice (see Kress 70-77). Nevertheless, I still believe there is place for words *sans* multimedia. For the present, alphanumeric text still dominates scholarly writing; therefore, this mode of writing will continue to be taught in English composition. Thus, aside from an historical study being valuable in itself, by limiting this study to first-generation hypertexts I hope to make a significant contribution to contemporary composition studies. For, as Douglas has demonstrated, hypertext theory concerns not just hypertext; it sheds light on literacy practices in general (*EOB* 27-30).

Text-rich hypertext offers a degree of conceptual subtlety and narrative power that cannot be matched by an iconic medium such as film or television. Another factor to consider when weighing the merits of incorporating graphics or multimedia into a

[16] *OTM* stands for Michael Joyce's *Of Two Minds: Hypertext Pedagogy and Poetics*.

hypertext is that verbal and iconic signs tend of compete with each other for the viewer's attention. As Silvio Gaggi discusses, the reader or viewer tends to assume that one semiotic mode must be privileged over the other. For example, on a page with text and graphic images one may be uncertain whether the image illustrates the verbal text or the text functions as a caption for the image (Gaggi 7). Such confusion is obviously not an issue when a page or screen contains only text.

The goal of feminist hypertext or a feminist theorization of hypertext need not be the replacement of the conventional literary work with hypertext, in the manner of linear, agonistic rhetoric. The primary value of a feminist articulation of hypertext, as I see it, is that it throws into relief conventional, dominant literacy technologies. As a marginal, though emergent, technology, hypertext represents a "privileged" standpoint from which to understand the conventional literary work. Once one has been exposed to hypertext, conventional literacy no longer goes without saying; the neutrality, invisibility, and taken-for-grantedness of conventional writing are called into question. As Landow writes, "even a brief experience of reading and writing in a hypertext environment denaturalizes and demystifies the culture of the printed book" (307). Similarly, Douglas argues that "reading hypertext fiction reminds us of just how complex the act of reading is, a condition to which a lifetime of immersion in a highly conventionalized, print-saturated environment has made us virtually immune" (*EOB* 35).

Literary hypertext has a way of *re/minding* a person—or making one more aware or mindful—of what reading and writing are all about. In other words, hypertext might function as the *other* that provides a unique insight into the practices of conventional,

print-based literacy, allowing us to see conventional literacy and conventional literary works as though for the first time. Although for the "foreseeable" future we will likely continue to use print texts and pens, pencils, and paper, if only for their convenience, we will be less likely to conceive of these technologies as natural, historically inevitable, apolitical, or ideologically "innocent" (Haraway 157). In other words, these technologies will no longer be treated as transparent media or tools.

Patterns and Recurrence

The relationship between the text and the reader is premised on the active construction of patterns. But, of course, the construction or recognition of patterns is vital to human cognition, particularly when it comes to the sciences. For instance, according to quantum mechanics, "the only thing that truly exists in the universe is pattern; the substance that supports these patterns is, in some fundamental sense, inessential" (Helmreich 76). Human beings actively construct patterns out of chaotic sensory impressions. Hence, "the patterns the ear hears (like the patterns the eye sees) are patterns its perceptual habits make available" (Fish 986). Of course, this principle of pattern making is not new. A more novel idea is that the construction of patterns produces the sensation of dwelling inside the object of one's contemplation, or being incorporated into (or embodying) those patterns in the manner of Hayles's "extended mind," as mentioned above.

Readers of all types of text construct patterns during the interpretive process. But in the case of hypertext, this process is taken to another level. Inasmuch as a hypertext is

composed of many textual fragments, with some lexias being no more than a few words in length, the reader must work hard to construct a coherent text. A reader may have to explore a hypertext for several hours before any sort of coherent text begins to emerge. And in accord with the principle of the extended mind, as patterns are constructed, the wreater's consciousness may be said to extend into the text, and the wreater may experience a sense of being present in, or inhabiting, the text.

From Presence to Pattern and Back

In a 1993 article, Hayles argued that information technology was producing a shift from the ancient polarity of presence/absence to pattern/randomness:

> Money is increasingly experienced as informational patterns stored in computer banks rather than the presence of cash; in surrogacy and *in vitro* fertilization cases, informational genetic patterns compete with physical presence for the right to determine the 'legitimate' parent; [. . .] criminals are tied to crime scenes through DNA patterns rather than eyewitness accounts verifying their presence; [. . .] sexual relationships are pursued through the virtual spaces of computer networks rather than through meetings at which the participants are physically present. ("VB" 71)

Increasingly, then, as inhabitants of information-rich societies, we are more likely to ask whether something is patterned or random rather than whether it is present or absent. Relationships between individuals might even be said to be more interesting than the individuals themselves—and the same goes for texts and other entities. Furthermore,

although I have claimed that a hypertext may be treated as a living organism, we are now in a position to see living organisms primarily as patterns rather than presences. Even a deceased human being can "live on" as a pattern—i.e., as a pattern of influences felt by posterity. In fact, it would be unusual if a deceased individual did not somehow live on as a pattern in at least a few people's lives.

Hayles also intimates that there may be a complex, complementary interaction between two fundamental polarities: presence/absence and pattern/randomness ("VB" 91). Although, to my knowledge, Hayles does not pursue this provocative idea further, her suggestion of a complementary interaction between these two polarities implies that as a person begins to recognize patterns, she begins to feel present, or part of, what she is contemplating, which may be a text, an institution such as a university, a religious tradition, a family, or anything else that may be experienced as patterned. By contrast, when a person perceives only randomness, she is likely to feel alienated from a text, institution, or tradition. I am not arguing that the wreater is actually physically present in the text. Rather, as the wreater begins to recognize patterns in the text and even contributes her own text and reorganizes the textual structure—or writes herself into the text—she begins to feel that she is part of the text rather than alienated from it. In accord with the principle of the cybernetic feedback loop, recognizing and constructing patterns in a text produces changes in the text and changes in the reader. There is a sense of

"border crossing" as the wreater lives in the text and the text lives in the wreater.[17] The boundaries, then, between text and wreater are thoroughly permeable.

In addition to pattern, another key term in hypertext theory is recurrence. Hypertextual wreating is quite recursive; there is typically a great deal of rereading as the same lexia or group of lexias is encountered in different contexts. But, as Stuart Moulthrop notes, "It is crucial to distinguish recursion from return to simple repetition" (2516). When we read recursively we reread text with a different perspective; we read the same text from a different epistemic position. According to Hayles, "Pattern can be recognized through redundancy or repetition of elements. If there is only repetition, however, no new information is imparted; the intermixture of randomness rescues pattern from sterility" ("VB" 78). Particularly in the early stages of reading a hypertext, as the reader is trying to work her way into the text, the same lexias may be read over and over.[18] Recursive reading, then, supplants unilinear reading or the unilinear narrative. When Joyce, in discussing hypertext poetics, speaks of "the power of recurrence" (20) and "the rhythm of recurrence" (*Othermindedness* 120), the rhythm in this case is the perception of pattern—a sense of order or pockets of coherence amid chaos and incoherence.

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[17] See Gloria Anzaldua's *Borderland/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (19-35) for an eloquent discussion of "border crossing" as metaphor and reality.

[18] In theorizing hypertext from a feminist perspective, we can also draw a parallel between hypertextual recurrence and the daily round of "women's work," as defined by traditional cultures all over the world. I make this argument in chapter 3.

Analogously, other human beings are mostly mysteries to us when we initially meet them, but the more time we spend with a particular person, observing recurrent patterns of behavior and attitude, the better we understand them. Very much like the act of reading a hypertext, we always meet other people *in medias res*. And we cannot be sure when a personal relationship will come to an end, just as we do not know when or where a hypertext will end. In fact, the text ends for each reader when she decides she has read enough, or in other words, when the narrative, or the relationship between reader and text, has run its course. The reader of a conventional text knows how many pages are in a book or article; she knows when she has read every word on every page and there is nothing more, on the surface anyway, to see. Of course, there may be allusions that are missed and various degrees of misunderstanding, but the reader can be sure that she has read the complete text—and read it in the sequence intended by the author. But with regard to hypertext, reading the "entire text" has no meaning. Whatever text is instantiated in a particular reading is *the* text for that reading; the remainder of the material coded in the work can only be instantiated as other texts.

Since the pages are not numbered or organized sequentially, the reader of a literary hypertext never knows exactly *where she is* in the text. As Shelley Jackson writes in *Patchwork Girl*,

> When I open a book I know where I am, which is restful. My reading is spatial and even volumetric. I tell myself, I am a third of the way down through a rectangular solid, I am a quarter of the way down the page, I am here on the page, here on this line, here, here, here. But where am I now? I am in a here and a

present moment that has no history and no expectations for the future. ("this writing")[19]

Jackson's language here is the language of mathematics, particularly geometry. But in a hypertextual environment one's reliance on mathematics and measurement breaks down. Books may be measured in words, lines, paragraphs, pages, chapters, and so forth. But a spatially dispersed hypertext is not measured in any meaningful sense at all. Consequently, geographic and cartographic metaphors do not transfer well to hypertext theory. A hypertext cannot even be quantified as computer memory, because the size of the file changes as the wreater writes herself into the text.

Empiricism, the hallmark of the modernism, is based almost entirely on measurement. What cannot be measured is unimportant, or perhaps even nonexistent, for the empiricist. Luce Irigaray refers to the Western obsession with mathematical measurement as she writes of "the mystery that [woman] represents in a culture that claims to enumerate everything by units, inventory everything by individualities. *She is neither one nor two*" (1468). It is arguable, though, that in terms of what is most significant to us as human beings, things that can be measured are not very important at all. Love, passion, compassion, curiosity, and similar human experiences are not measurable. Which brings up another reason for choosing the organism metaphor over the landscape metaphor for hypertext: landscapes are inevitably measured and mapped,

[19] Since hypertexts do not generally have page numbers, Storyspace lexias, or writing spaces, are labeled. The parenthetic citation for "this writing" indicates the label of a writing space in *Patchwork Girl*.

while a hypertext, like a living organism, cannot be reliably measured. The Cartesian coordinate system does not work with hypertext.

A corollary of measurement is exclusion. In order to measure something, we must draw lines and borders and exclude what doesn't fit our measurement criteria (e.g., the exclusion of interpersonal skills from IQ tests). But hypertext differs from the conventional literary work in that hypertext is not premised on exclusion; hypertext is not a zero-sum game. Douglas writes, "Print mostly works in much the same way as a legal decision: a zero-sum game that settles conflicting claims and narratives constructed by each side with a single decision, inevitably validating one version or the events while entirely suppressing the other (20). But with hypertext, since multiple texts may be instantiated, there do not have to be winners and losers among texts or readings. Hypertext works against the modernist dichotomies that, Code argues, necessarily produce "closures and exclusions" (*RS* 194). By contrast, the conventional work follows the Aristotelian logic of noncontradiction, which requires closures, exclusions, and impermeable boundaries.

Feminist Epistemology

The second part of this three-pronged study, feminist epistemology, is relevant because I treat the act of reading and writing hypertext as a *way of knowing*, or epistemology, that differs significantly from the mainstream epistemology.[20] Mainstream

[20] The phrase "women's ways of knowing" was popularized by Mary Field Belenky et al. in *Women's Ways of Knowing: The Development of Self, Voice, and Mind* (New York: Basic Books, 1986).

epistemology, in turn, is associated with conventional literacy. In other words, knowledge mediated by conventional text and knowledge mediated by hypertext differ substantially.

It is vital to understand that there is no *pure*, unmediated knowledge; all knowledge is *mediated*. As Haraway writes, "There is no unmediated photograph or passive camera obscura" (190). There is no *direct* access to truth or reality. Knowledge is mediated by language, culture, power relations, technologies, and so forth; therefore, hypertext, as a medium, inevitably influences the act of knowing. Of course, I am not the first person to suggest that hypertext is a way of knowing. Joyce, for example, has stated that "some see hypertext as an other way of reading; some see it as a new way of knowing—yet what is read and who should know are both in dispute" (*OTM* 24). One purpose of the present study is to elucidate just "what is read" when one reads a hypertext, along with how gender shapes or influences what is read.

An Overview of Feminist Epistemology

On the following pages I present a brief overview of feminist epistemology, beginning with how feminist epistemology differs from mainstream epistemology. According to Code, "Mainstream Anglo-American epistemology [has] defined itself around a conviction that its principle task [is] to determine the necessary and sufficient conditions for objective, uniformly valid 'knowledge in general'" ("Epistemology" 173). Feminist epistemologists differ from the masculinist mainstream of their field in arguing that knowledge is always contingent, tentative, partial, and politically interested. Knowledge is also validated within epistemic communities, as opposed to resting solely

on individualistic appeals to observational or empirical evidence. Thus, in feminist "revisionist empiricism, inquirers are answerable as much to the epistemic community as to the evidence; details of a knower's epistemic location and interests count among the conditions that make knowledge possible, and are likewise open to critical scrutiny" (Code, "Epistemology" 177); that is to say, "In many feminist stories of knowledge production, objectivity is as much a consequence of negotiation and communal criticism [. . .] as of scrupulous attention to 'the evidence'" (Code, *RS* 182).[21]

In many accounts, feminist epistemology begins with a deconstruction of the Cartesian autonomous, rational knower—the individual epistemic agent, or subject, who knows the external world, or object, from a safe distance. The Cartesian knower relies heavily on binaries, particularly the mind/body split and the subject/object split. As Diana M.A. Relke writes, "The scientific method is not so much a method as an epistemology, a dualistic and hierarchical way of knowing the world. . . . It determines the questions science asks, what evidence is persuasive in answering them, and what counts as legitimate knowledge."[22] Thus, while mainstream Western science holds to an objectivist way of knowing, many feminist epistemologists, as well as rhetoricians, argue that knowledge is both objective and subjective, or a hybrid of subjectivity and objectivity. Feminist epistemology, in other words, does not do away with objectivity—just *objectivism*, the ideology that strives to cleanse knowledge of all traces of subjectivity.

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[21] *RS* stands for *Rhetorical Spaces: Essays on Gendered Locations*.

[22] Unpaginated online text: Diana M.A. Relke. "Feminist Pedagogy and the Integration of Knowledge: Toward a More Interdisciplinary University." A lecture delivered at the University of Saskatchewan, 1994. 19 July 2002. <http://www.usask.ca/wgst/journals/conf3.htm>.

There is no need for epistemologist to choose between objectivity and subjectivity. In feminist epistemology, the masculinist *either/or* paradigm is replaced by the *both, and* (or *both, and, and*) paradigm (Douglas, "Understanding" 125). As demonstrated by the work of Keller, Code, Hartsock, and others, feminist epistemologists strive to break down the classical Western binaries of mind/body, reason/emotion, objective/subjective, internal/external, masculine/feminine, fact/belief, and so forth. And in this interrogation of binaristic thinking, feminist epistemologists share some, though certainly not all, of the concerns of postmodernists and deconstructionists.

Feminist epistemology is situated, embodied, and relativistic—but not relativistic in the conventional, caricatured sense according to which no real or reliable knowledge is possible. Reliable knowledge is never neutral and disinterested, but neither is it wholly arbitrary or nonobjective. Given that a number of feminist epistemologists (e.g., Keller, Harding, Haraway) are also scientists and, consequently, have a personal stake in a qualified empiricism, it makes sense that they would insist on a physical reality that imposes constraints on what is possible. Most feminist epistemologists differ from schools of thought, such "ludic" post-structuralism, that treat human reality as an abstract play of signifiers. The oppression of females, along with other *others*, in contemporary society is not a play of language, but a concrete reality that must be actively resisted, subverted, and ultimately abolished.

Far from dooming scholarship or science to a politically enfeebling relativism, taking subjectivity into account, as feminist epistemologists urge, promises to bolster the validity of scholarly work. Haraway advocates a dynamic, feminist objectivity, as she

states that "feminist objectivity means quite simply situated knowledges" (188). Such a *situated* stance contextualizes scholarship rhetorically, making it richer or "thicker." Taking subjectivity into account creates what Keller calls "dynamic objectivity," which acts as a corrective for instrumental ethics. "Dynamic objectivity aims at a form of knowledge that grants to the world around us its independent integrity but does so in a way that remains cognizant of, indeed relies on, our connectivity with that world. In this, dynamic objectivity is not unlike empathy" (Keller, *Reflections* 117). I prefer the term *situated objectivity*; this term expresses the principle that both Haraway and Keller describe. A feminist ethics of care and respect may be founded on situated objectivity, and this stance may supplant instrumental ethics.

Mainstream Anglo-American epistemology, as Code explains, is founded on a paradigm of knowing medium-sized objects, or objects visible to the naked eye and manipulable by human beings. And when knowledge of medium-sized objects (e.g., Newton's apple, billiard balls, bullets) is taken as exemplary knowledge, a strict subject-object epistemology results. In contrast, Code advocates an epistemology founded on the experience of *knowing other people.* Code argues that knowing other people is more far more exemplary than knowing medium-sized objects. After all, human infants come to know other people, especially their primary caregivers, long before they gain a practical understanding of medium-sized objects. "Developmentally, learning what she or he can expect of other people is one of the first and most essential kinds of knowledge a child acquires" (Code, *RS* 45). Knowledge of other people differs from *propositional* knowledge. As Code writes,

> The fact that it is acquired differently, interactively, relationally, differentiates it both as process and as product from standard propositional knowledge [. . .]. The contrast between its multi-dimensional, multiperspectival character and the stark simplicity of standard paradigms requires philosophers to reexamine the practice of granting exemplary status to those paradigms. (*RS* 47).

Perhaps, in part, to ease the concerns of scientists, Code goes on to point out that "taking knowledge of other people as a model does not [. . .] require scientists to begin talking to their rocks and cells [. . .]. It calls, rather, for a recognition that rocks and cells, and scientists, are located in multiple relations to one another, all of which are open to analysis and critique" (*RS* 50). Again, subjectivity does not replace objectivity; these two modes of knowing together form a dynamic, or *situated*, objectivity.

Although knowing another person does not offer the scientific precision obtainable when studying medium-sized objects, knowing other people is probably more necessary to a healthy, satisfying life. In fact, "the items a person knows quite unequivocally, as she knows that a cup is on the table, comprise a small part of her—or anyone's—knowledge" (Code, *RS* 3). Additionally, knowing that an apple is red or that water freezes at zero degrees centigrade is safely apolitical knowledge (Code, *RS* 37); it is generally noncontroversial and ethically neutral. Of course, when it comes to how bullets, nuclear missiles, or similarly dangerous medium-sized objects *are used*, politics is definitely a factor—but only because their use has become a human relations issue. By contrast, relational knowledge, or knowledge of other living organisms, is in itself eminently political and fraught with ethical questions.

A familiarity with the tenets of feminist epistemology leads to the suspicion that literary works, at least in formalist schools of criticism, have often been treated much like other medium-sized objects, or located on the same ontological plane as apples, chairs, and billiard balls. Under this model, the reader's activities are ignored because "the text is taken to be self-sufficient (Fish 982). This practice has encouraged critics to attempt to know literary works in an objective, "scientific" way. In fact, "establishing the fixed text has been the humanistic *raison d'être* since the Renaissance. To nail it down forever and then finally explain it, that has been what literary scholars do" (Lanham 7). Inasmuch as the literary text is assumed to be concealing secrets, objectivist schools of literary criticism strive to extract these secrets from the text. According to this view, great authors are those who are highly skilled in the use of ambiguity, indirection, and symbolism, and the task of the critic is to *explain* the text to the fullest extent possible. But for the post-structuralist critic, "there are no fixed texts but only interpretive strategies making them" (Fish 989). In other words, if the text is constructed by the reader rather than the author, it is not the *text* that needs to be explained, but the *interpretation*.

As Fish argues, interpretive strategies are learned within interpretive communities (989). Furthermore, historically, many (perhaps even most) interpretive communities have been situated within patriarchal cultures. Consider, for instance, the violence of the *nailing-down* metaphor, connoting as it does nailing down a victim. Janice Hocker Rushing has linked hunting with scholarly criticism, stating that "the critic uses methods to investigate text(s) like a hunter employs the weapon to down the prey" (158). Rushing argues further that texts are coded feminine and criticism is coded masculine (161). And

if texts are coded feminine, it follows that what is "nailed down" are not simply texts, but *femaleness*—the elusive, slippery, cultural ideal of *woman*, the *other* in patriarchal societies.

But far from hunting and controlling the text as prey, engaging with a hypertext is more like knowing another person, or at least knowing another living organism of some sort. Texts are indeterminate, shifting, and resistant to final interpretation. Beyond the indeterminacy at the level of interpretation, in the case of hypertext, the actual marks on the page (or pixels on the screen) are too "slippery" to ever be nailed down, as a medium-sized object might be. A good analogy might be trying to nail down mercury. Human beings are also mercurial, shifting, sliding texts; we shift as we move into different contexts. Hence, knowledge of human begins is never final or unequivocal.

Knowledge of other people has perhaps not been deemed as important as knowledge of medium-size objects because interpersonal knowledge cannot be based on measurement. One issue is that the measurer would have to be measured as well. But aside from the problems of measuring a *relationship*, living beings themselves cannot be measured in the way that medium-sized objects can be. Of course, the human body is subject to measurement, and the female body has probably been measured and weighed more than any other "object" in history; the body, however, is far from identical to the person. As Greco writes, "The body is, among other things, a social question" ("potent").[23] The living, changing person, or the subjective experience of embodiment,

[23] This quote is taken from the writing space, or lexia, called "potent" in *Cyborg: Engineering the Body Electric.*

cannot be measured. Thus when shifting from mainstream objectivism to an epistemology founded on knowing other people, one gives up the ideal of perfect scientific precision but gains a far richer, more nuanced kind of knowledge.

Only dead things, like dead languages, can be justifiably objectified. And while a knowledge of human beings (and texts) can be attained, it is not like knowing that apples fall toward the earth or that water freezes at zero degrees centigrade. But an interesting fact is that while knowledge of other people is always partial, it is usually "good enough" for human beings to interact with and trust one another. There is no need for scientific precision when it comes to interpersonal relationships or knowing other living organism. Moreover, an ethics of care and respect depends on the realization that we are all partial, imperfect, or flawed.

Knowledge of medium-size objects is, for the most part, *propositional* knowledge, as indicated by the "S-knows-that-p" formula of mainstream epistemology. "S-knows-that-p" is shorthand for *subject knows that proposition* (e.g., A child knows that apples are red and round). Propositional knowledge is knowing *that* something is or is not true, *that* something is or is not possible, and so forth. This kind of knowledge differs radically from knowledge of human beings. Thus, feminist epistemology goes beyond the paradigmatic "S-knows-that-p" formula. As Code argues, "Knowledge of other people develops, operates, and is open to interpretation at different levels; it admits of degrees in ways that knowing that the book is red does not. Hence it is qualitatively different from the simple observational knowledge commonly constitutive of epistemological

paradigms" (*WCSN* 37).[24] Knowledge of other people is far too equivocal to be "grasped" by mainstream epistemology.

As indicated by the foregoing, mainstream epistemologists conceive of knowledge quite differently than do feminist epistemologists. In the still influential positivist-empiricist tradition, knowledge may be defined as

> the propositional product of a perceptual confrontation between a sentient creature (a subject) and an insentient item (an object) that is accessible to the creature's sensory apparatus [. . .]. [T]he subject is able to utter statements about [the object] that name or quantify some of its properties or indicate how they are spatially interrelated. Those statements become the elements of knowledge when/if there is 'sufficient' evidence to support the conclusion that the object is just as the propositions state. (Code, *RS* 166)

If a hypertext is anything like a living organism, then propositional knowledge is inadequate for a sophisticated theorization hypertext. Hypertexts are not quantifiable, measurable objects; they cannot be adequately described in spatial terms; nor are they separable from their readers and writers.

Feminist epistemology, as should be evident from even this brief overview, intersects quite productively with hypertext theory. And the borders of both hypertext theory and feminist rhetoric also intersect in interesting ways with feminist rhetoric, as I hope to make clear in the following section.

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[24] *WCSN* stands for *What Can She Know? Feminist Theory and the Construction of Knowledge.*

Feminist Rhetoric

Feminist rhetoric is distinguished from the mainstream tradition by virtue of taking gender as a primary analytic category. Yet gender is not the exclusive concern of feminist rhetoricians. In 1989, Andrea Lunsford and Janice Lauer stated that the multiple modes of inquiry engaged in by scholars in rhetoric and composition may be classified under three headings: historical scholarship, rhetorical or theoretical inquiry, and empirical research ("The Place of Rhetoric" 106). Of course, feminists are included among these scholars; therefore, in the following pages I organize my review of feminist rhetoric according Lunsford and Lauer's three categories.

Feminist historical scholarship in rhetoric, like feminist epistemology, is founded on a critique of a received rhetorical tradition—in this case the canon that, following Tisias, Corax, and perhaps Gorgias, begins in earnest with Plato and Aristotle and continues up to the present, largely sidestepping female and other nonprivileged, culturally peripheral voices. The received tradition, in other words, is premised on the elision of troublesome gaps, the very gaps that feminist historiographers work within. Lunsford, for example, speaks of feminist scholars of rhetoric who

> attempt to [. . .] interrupt the seamless narrative usually told about the rhetorical tradition and to open up possibilities for multiple rhetorics, rhetorics that would not name and valorize one traditional, competitive, agonistic, and linear mode of rhetorical discourse but would rather incorporate other, often dangerous moves: breaking the silence; naming in personal terms; employing dialogics; recognizing

and using the power of conversation; moving centripetally towards connections; and valuing—indeed insisting upon—collaboration. ("On Reclaiming" 6)

The emphasis on conversation is important to hypertext theory, as will be increasingly evident in later chapters of this work. In brief, a read-write interface such as Storyspace produces a shift from classical *oratorical* rhetoric to a more *conversational* mode, and these conversations are multiple and multilinear. I will reserve a more detailed discussion of the connections between feminist rhetoric and hypertext theory for subsequent chapters.

With respect to historical scholarship, Cheryl Glenn writes, "In concert with historiography, feminist research has also worked to resist the Western paternal narrative of rhetoric—a narrative Corbett described as 'one of the most patriarchal of all the academic disciplines'—by recovering and recuperating women's contributions in the broad history of culture making" (9). Yet feminist historical scholarship in rhetoric is not just a matter of inserting (token) female or other historically silenced voices into the received history of Western rhetoric. Nor should the "great man" history of rhetoric be matched by a "great woman" tradition.[25] We need to do much more than merely write women into an individualistic tradition. Raymie McKerrow proposes that "we reverse the phrasing—instead of writing women into the history of rhetoric, let us proceed to write rhetoric into the history of women" (317). Thus, the history of rhetoric must be "fitted" to

[25] The flaw, in my view, of the methodology of texts such as Cheryl Glenn's *Rhetoric Retold* and *Reclaiming Rhetorica*, edited by Andrea Lunsford, is that it is premised on a "great woman," individualistic historiography of rhetoric. A more productive history of feminist rhetoric might focus instead on collaborative work and social movements, rather than exceptional individuals. Here I concur with Barbara

women's lives, rather than vice-versa. As Susan Jarratt argues, what are called for are *rhetorical histories*, not histories of rhetoric. "Traditional histories of rhetoric could be defined at those histories having taken as their subject matter chiefly documents explicitly calling themselves 'rhetorics': i.e., pedagogical treatises concerned with the composition and delivery of persuasive orations" (13). Such histories do not include poetic, scientific, or philosophical genres. And, for proponents of the received tradition, it goes without saying that cookbooks, etiquette manuals, letters, diaries, and other historically "feminine" texts are not rhetorical.

Under the heading of rhetorical or theoretical inquiry, Lunsford and Lauer's second category, feminists have interrogated the hegemonic rhetorical theory of the West and the mainstream, objectivist epistemology it is founded on. In particular, feminist revisions of rhetoric have called into question the agonistic character of mainstream rhetoric. Consequently, classical persuasion (i.e., moving an audience to action or changing an audience's mind) has been dislodged from its central position rhetorical theory. Erika Lindemann departs from the classical agonistic paradigm when she defines rhetoric as "a form of reasoning about probabilities, based on assumptions people share as members of a community" (42). The emphasis on community is an important revision of the "great man" tradition of rhetoric, or the "good man skilled in speaking" (Quintilian). Accordingly, feminist rhetoricians have advocated collaborative and dialogic rhetorics, sometimes referencing the ideals of the Greek sophists (see Jarratt). As indicated above,

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Biesecker's well-known argument in "Coming to Terms with Recent Attempts to Write Women into the History of Rhetoric." I take up this argument again in chapter 2.

in feminist rhetorical theory, metaphors of conversation replace militaristic, conquest metaphors that construct rhetoric as a win/lose, right/wrong, us/them proposition. The shift to a conversational rhetoric is thus a critical move that makes room for multiple rhetorics.

In a 1995 article, Lunsford, Ede, and Glenn explored the intersecting borders of rhetoric and feminism. Due to the importance and comprehensiveness of this article, I summarize it here at some length. The major part of the article is organized under the five canons of classical rhetoric: invention and memory, arrangement, style, and delivery—the first two being linked because of a rich overlap between and inquiring (*inventio*) and knowing (*memoria*) ("Border Crossings" 410). Feminist readings of the rhetorical tradition expose the political and ideological assumptions that inform acts of invention and memory, such as who is considered capable of inventing and remembering arguments and what counts as knowledge. Traditional images of the rhetor must be interrogated, for "until recently, the figure of the rhetor has been assumed to be masculine, unified, autonomous, and capable of acting rationally on the world through language" (412). Regarding arrangement, for over 2500 years patterns of rhetorical arrangement have been based on the agonistic "conquest model," which aims to triumph over an opponent (415). Feminists, by contrast, often opt for dialogical, collaborative, and open-ended discursive patternings—opening up texts to multiple voices and styles (416). The canon of style historically, and particularly under modernism, has been both gendered and classed—that is, negatively associated with women and the persuasion of popular audiences (422). Yet many feminists resist stylistic conventions that dichotomize

public and private, that devalue personal experience in favor of "objective" fact, "rational" logic, and established authorities (423). In terms of delivery, throughout most of Western history women have been barred from public discourse, which led many to alternate media, as in speaking indirectly through secondary sources, translations of male authors, mystical visions, autobiographies, letters, and so on (431). Hence, these nontraditional sources (e.g., translations of male authors, and so on) ought to studied for the light they may shed on rhetoric, or on humanity as the "symbol using animal" (Burke, *Rhetoric of Religion* 40).

In "Toward a *Mestiza* Rhetoric," Lunsford presents an interview she conducted with teacher, theorist of writing, accomplished rhetorician, and prolific author Gloria Anzaldua. The primary theme of the interview is Anzaldua's "personal triumph over the 'tradition of silence' and her ability to imagine, enact, and inhabit spaces that go beyond dichotomies of all kinds." Anzaldua, author of *Borderlands/La Frontera*, envisions the self as a *process* allows for nonbinary identity, for new states of "mestiza" consciousness, and for multiple writing strategies—what Lunsford calls a "mestiza rhetoric" (2). *Mestiza*, in other words, is one name for the rhetor who embraces multiplicity and multilinearity, and in this sense "*mestiza* rhetoric" may contribute to a feminist theorization of hypertext; therefore, I return to this theme in subsequent chapters.

Feminist empirical scholarship in rhetoric deals, in large part though not exclusively, with the teaching of writing, with one of the most researched topics being collaborative writing. Based on their ground-breaking research on collaborative writing, Ede and Lunsford identified two modes of collaboration that were of most interest to them as

women and collaborative writers: the hierarchical mode and the dialogic mode. In the hierarchical mode, "collaboration is linearly structured, driven by highly specific goals, and played out by people who play clearly defined roles" ("Rhetoric in a New Key" 235). This style of collaboration is "typically conservative" and "predominately masculine" (235). The dialogic mode, by contrast, is "loosely structured, and the roles enacted within it are fluid" (235). Lunsford and Ede characterize the dialogic mode as "predominately feminine" (236). In a 1992 article, Lunsford and Ede critiqued the mainstream, expressivist notions of collaborative writing, stating that "collaborative learning theory from its inception has failed to challenge traditional concepts of radical individualism and ownership of ideas" and has operated in a traditional and largely hierarchical way" ("Collaborative Authorship" 695).

The feminist emphasis on collaborative writing is relevant to this study despite the fact that I have selected only single-authored hypertexts. The Storyspace interface is quite amenable to collaborative writing, and I will explore this topic most fully in the final chapter of this study, which focuses on the implications of hypertext theory for composition pedagogy. But aside from the type of collaboration familiar to compositionists, there is another kind of collaboration whereby the reader of a hypertext collaborates with the author to extend the text; that is, the reader collaborates with the author in writing herself into the text. Furthermore, if one wreater passes a hypertext along to another wreater, the collaboration becomes multiple.

Another fact to consider is that both feminist rhetoric and feminist epistemology are deeply skeptical of absolute, noncontextualized truths. As mentioned above, feminist rhetorics, as well as epistemologies, have been traced back to the 5th century BCE Greek sophists, e.g., Protagoras of Abdera, Gorgias of Leontini, Prodicus Hippias, and others. The sophists "believed and taught that notions of 'truth' had to be adjusted to fit the ways of a particular audience in a certain time and with a certain set of beliefs and laws" (Jarratt xv). In other words, *kairos*, or the right time and place for a rhetorical encounter, was a primary concern of the sophists. Thus, sophistic rhetoric was *situated* rhetoric.

The sophists, despite the enmity displayed toward them by Plato and Aristotle, likely influenced later thinkers, such as members of the Skeptic school of philosophy, including founder of Skepticism, Pyrrho of Elis (circa 365-275 BCE), Carneades (circa 214-129 BCE), and Sextus Empiricus (circa 200 CE). The link between the sophists and the skeptics is suggested in Jarratt's observation that the "restoration of good opinion [for the sophists] began in the nineteenth century with Hegel, who saw the sophists as a necessary, *skeptical* antithesis to the Presocratics, eventually synthesized in the idealism of Plato" (xx-xxi, emphasis added). Skepticism, then, acts as a counterpoint to the abstractions and generalizations characteristic of Platonism.

The skeptical focus on the particular over the general has definite associations with feminist epistemology as well as feminist rhetoric. In comparing skepticism to feminist epistemology, Code refers to "skepticisms which are resourceful, not defeatist." Thus, the "ancient skepticisms of Pyrrho and Sextus Empiricus were declarations not of nihilism,

but of the impossibility of certainty, of the need to withhold definitive judgment" (Code *RS* 55). The relevance of such historical information to the present study is that feminist rhetoric and epistemology, like philosophical skepticism and sophistic rhetoric, are not hopelessly relativists, subjective, or nihilistic. By extension, a feminist theorization of hypertext would be expected to foreground the creation of a new way of reading and writing, not the destruction of conventional literacies or conventional texts.

As should be evident by now, the sophistic/skeptic stance is thoroughly appropriate for a hypertextual environment that can never be known, or mapped, with certainty. It is noteworthy that in 155 BCE Carneades was sent as a member of an embassy to Rome. While there, he lectured on skepticism, allegedly asserting that knowledge is impossible and that truth has no criterion. The Roman statesman, Cato the Elder, however, believed the Skeptic philosophy was dangerous to the youth of Rome, and he impelled the Roman Senate to banish Carneades (Radical Academy).[26] I read this episode as emblematic of the fate of epistemologies and rhetorics that have dared to challenge the Western Platonic-Aristotelian hegemony. Hence, my argument is that the late-twentieth-century emergence of hypertext technologies and theories, along with feminist epistemology and feminist rhetoric, should be contextualized within the postmodernist resurgence, or indeed *explosion*, of historically suppressed ways of thinking, communicating, and being. Such an explosion cannot be contained, but it may be theorized for the benefit of twenty-

[26] The Radical Academy. "Adventures in Ancient Philosophy." Available online: http://radicalacademy.com/adiphilethical.htm#skeptics. Accessed 15 Dec 01.

first-century compositionists and their students, along with general readers (or wreaters) of literary hypertext.

In the next chapter I articulate in more detail the implications of a theory and practice that sits at the crossroads of hypertext theory, feminist epistemology, and feminist rhetoric. Specifically, I argue that a hypertext theory informed by feminist epistemology leads to a rearticulation of feminist rhetoric. Thus, the first two elements of this three-pronged study push the third element in a new direction.

CHAPTER 2

Guilty Texts, Guilty Wreaters, Guilty Women

As I argued in the previous chapter, feminist literary hypertext represents a mode of discourse (i.e., multivocal, multiperspectival, nonhierarchical) that has historically been excluded from mainstream Western discourse. Literary hypertext is typically judged by the standards of the default textual medium, which is conventional print text. Yet voices that are excluded, suppressed, and silenced inevitably break out, often in seemingly jarring tones—i.e., tones that jar the mainstream out of its complacency. Hence, feminist literary hypertext may be seen within the larger context of the cacophony of long-suppressed, long-silenced voices—voices that sound "shrill"—i.e., or lacking in dignity, decorum, or propriety (or *property*, the phallic marker)

Faced with the necessity of assimilating, embracing, appropriating—or simply dealing with—these new, discordant voices, many theorists within the field of rhetoric and composition are now coming to terms with new modes of writing and generic transformations. Myka Vielstimmig, for instance, observed, "The new essay seems to have its own logic: intuitive, emergent, dialogic, multiple—one grounded in working together and in re/presenting that working together" (90).[1] These new modes of writing are facilitated by new media, such as hypertext. Yet all literary texts, not just literary hypertexts, are fundamentally multiple. As Iser argues, "the reading process is selective

[1] Myka Vielstimmig is the collaborative pen name of Kathleen Yancy and Michael Spooner.

and the potential text is infinitely richer than any of its individual realizations" (959). A feminist theorization of hypertext must therefore account for textual indeterminacy and plurality.

My argument in this chapter is that that the conjunction of hypertext theory and feminist epistemology leads to a rearticulation of feminist rhetoric. I devote a large part of this chapter to exploring metaphors that relate to hypertext, feminist epistemology, and feminist rhetoric. I also discuss a number of arguments that either have been or could be made either to support or to discredit hypertext. More specifically, my rhetorical strategy in much of this chapter is to (1) present arguments or metaphors that either have been or might potentially be used to account for hypertext, (2) demonstrate why these arguments or metaphors either do or do not adequately account for hypertext, and (3) present alternative metaphors and arguments to displace those that do not advance our understanding of hypertext. But ultimately, the purpose for this wide-ranging exploration of hypertext is to reassess arguments and metaphors that have commonly been applied to feminist rhetoric.

My rationale for focusing so extensively on metaphors in this chapter is that metaphors have great heuristic value. I treat the heuristic process as the counterpart of hermeneutics; which is to say that discovery, or rhetorical invention, and the interpretation of texts go hand in hand. While my analysis of the five literary hypertexts involved hermeneutics, in mapping the relatively uncharted territory where hypertext theory, feminist epistemology, and feminist rhetoric intersect, I must rely heavily on heuristics. By playing with metaphors, a rhetor may discover an argument—and scholars

are essentially rhetors when it comes to publishing or presenting their work. I must also note that although I speak of "metaphors or arguments" or "metaphors and arguments," the fact is that many metaphors are also arguments—condensed arguments, but arguments nonetheless. It is now generally acknowledged that metaphors are not merely decorative; metaphors influence thoughts, attitudes, and actions; thus, they are rhetorical (Lakoff and Johnson 3-6; Eubanks 92-93). For example, the metaphor "Time is money" is a condensed argument, and its rhetorical power derives from capitalistic cultural codes. Such an argument would be unpersuasive, and probably meaningless, in a non-capitalist culture. Hence, in exploring, analyzing, and "listening to" metaphors, I am engaging in rhetorical criticism.

Taxis, *Hypotaxis*, and *Parataxis*

Much of the discussion in this chapter is undergirded by an analysis of three classical rhetorical terms: *taxis*, *hypotaxis*, and *parataxis*. Richard Lanham, in *A Handlist of Rhetoric Terms*, gives the literal meaning of the Greek term *taxis* as "arrangement, order" (150).[2] Another source defines *taxis* as "to divide a subject into its various components or attributes" (Burton).[3] *Taxis*, then, is roughly equivalent to the canon of arrangement in classical rhetoric. The second term, *hypotaxis* ("subjection") is defined as "an

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[2] *Taxis* originally referred to the arrangement or order of troops on a battlefield. For rhetoricians, *taxis* denotes the arrangement of an argument. Although the agonistic, masculinist foundations of classical rhetoric are evident in this terminology, the concept of *parataxis* is quite amenable to a feminist theorization of hypertext.

[3] Unpaginated website: Burton, Gideon O. "Silva Rhetoricae." Brigham Young University. http://humanities. byu.edu/rhetoric/silva.htm. Accessed 30 May 2001.

arrangement of clauses or phrases in a dependent or subordinate relationship (87). Lanham cites the finely crafted prose of Samuel Johnson as exemplary for hypotactic syntax. Finally, *parataxis* ("placing side by side") is defined as "clauses or phrases arranged independently (a coordinate, rather than a subordinate, construction). [. . .] Opposite of *hypotaxis*."[4] *Parataxis*, additionally, may be "essentially an oral syntax, as opposed to the literate balance and subordination of hypotaxis" (108).

For feminists and other critics of hierarchical social formations, the phrase "dependent or subordinate relationship" in Lanham's definition of *hypotaxis* has significance far beyond the realm of syntax. The syntactic patterns of elite, modernist literary discourse reflect political ideologies rooted in late-seventeenth and eighteenth-century Western Europe. In other words, *hypotaxis* is the syntax of the Enlightenment; therefore, this mode of rhetorical arrangement is deeply gendered, classed, and raced. Although changes at a linguistic level do not necessarily produce deeper changes in the "grammar" (i.e., rules and regulations) of a society, sociolinguistics have demonstrated that changes at the level of written language (e.g., editorial guidelines for nonsexist language) often serve as an index of social and ideological changes already underway. Furthermore, accentuating these linguistic changes may serve to quicken these changes or to intensify the destabilization of social hierarchies (Romaine 155-166).

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[4] A hyperbolic, or perhaps self-parodic, example of parataxis may be quoted from Michael Joyce: "The gesture of the parenthetical, the dialectic, the thematic, the rhythmic, the fugal, the isobaric, the metonymic, the list, the link, the litany, as well as any and all other—whether em-dashed or no—appositional stitchery constitutes the space of hypertextuality" (*Othermindedness* 156).

Insofar as lexias are arranged side-by-side or simply dispersed nonhierarchically, parataxis is the syntax of hypertext. Hence, employing hypertext to destabilize dominant syntactic patterns may be a step in the right direction for feminism. As Barbara Page wrote in 1996, literary hypertexts composed by women indicate that "resistance is possible at least at the level of syntax and structure" (14). Although hypertext may not actually be "intrinsically anti-hierarchical" as Landow claims (227), it can easily be deployed in a nonhierarchical way; that is to say, the paratactic structure of hypertext may contribute to the destabilization of gendered hierarchies.

Feminist Articulations of Hypertext

Feminists frustrated by modernist strictures are increasingly experimenting with different modes of writing and reading, as well as different media. Below, I very briefly survey the scholarship in this area as it relates to hypertext, beginning with a statement from a 1995 article by Lunsford, Ede, and Glenn: "At least some electronic media, such as hypertext, seem to allow for feminist concerns of inclusion, participation, and dialogue, and here we find the potential, at least, to allow full audience engagement in the establishment of the text itself" ("Border Crossings" 436). Inclusion of historically peripheral voices and the facilitation of dialogue are central tenets of feminist approaches to literature and language studies. Page observes that a number of female experimental writers "take for granted that language itself and much of canonical literature encode hierarchies of value that denigrate and subordinate women, and, therefore, they incorporate into their work a strategically critical or oppositional posture, as well as a

search for alternative forms of composition" (2). Page goes on to assert that "feminist theory and textual practice can be of particular pertinence to theorists of hypertext who recognize a radical politics in the rhetoric and poetics of hypertextual writing" (16). Laura Sullivan also referred to the political implications of hypertext, observing in a 1999 article that "recent postmodern feminists are urging us to transcend [the Western] binaristic way of thinking altogether. Hypertext, with its linked form, provides us with a unique textual form through which to realize this transcendence" (33). In other words, hypertext may be an effective means of subverting binaristic, hierarchical ways of thinking, reading, and writing, along, of course, with the oppressive social structures supported by traditional rhetorics.

The fundamental premise underlying my feminist theorization of hypertext is that writing—all modes of writing, not just hypertext—is *gendered*, and a secondary assumption is that all writing is *political*. Feminist hypertext theorists Donna LeCourt and Luann Barnes argue that

> social transformation is best executed by disrupting the gendered nature of writing. Because these forms of feminist intervention, or textual politics, rely on deconstructing text and creating new forms of textual space, they seem ideally suited for the differently ordered writing of hypertext, which alters reader-writing relationships and allows for expression of multiple perspectives. (56)

Feminist hypertext, in other words, is transgressive; it crosses borders and creates new ways of reading and writing, as well as new approaches to narrative. In a1996 article, Mary-Jo Haronian applauded women who "write beyond the old endings to delegitimate

the romance plot's usual conclusions, and to envision new paths for lives as well as for stories" (32). Haronian envisioned a novel "of simultaneous and interwoven sub-plots, following no set order and allowing for infinite stories with infinite uses: something like a rich Victorian novel in Hypertext software" (32). Of course, in 1996 such hypertexts were already on the market, although, given their heterogeneous, "genre-busting" styles, they have been difficult to categorize as novels.

Cyborg Politics and Epistemology

The work of Donna Haraway is helpful in theorizing hypertext from a feminist perspective, particularly in terms of the politics and epistemology of hypertext. And in referencing Haraway, I take my cue from a statement made by Pamela Gilbert: "It is surprising that the early key printed works on hypertext and literary theory [. . .] do not address Haraway—or indeed, feminist theory generally. In fact these printed works deal almost entirely with issues of structure, reducing political components to issues of canon formation" (264). I agree with Gilbert that a critical politics and ethics must be central to a feminist theorization of hypertext, hence the relevance of the cyborg principle. According to Haraway, "Cyborg politics is the struggle for language and the struggle against perfect communication, against the one code that translates all meaning perfectly, the central dogma of phallogocentrism" (176). Hypertext, as I have argued previously, is a cyborg literacy, and as such it is fundamentally political.

Hypertext is dispersed, multiple text; it is not singular or unified, and it never was. Of course, I am speaking of *native* hypertext—i.e., hypertext that begins as a hypertext

rather than as conventional text that is later chopped up into lexias and turned into a hypertext. Like native hypertext, feminist arguments and perspectives are never absolutely consistent or totalizing. Thus, Haraway's critique of the Edenic, utopian myth of original wholeness and innocence may be effectively appropriated by feminist hypertext theorists. Haraway writes, "The knowing self is partial in all its guises, never finished, whole, simply there and original; it is always constructed and stitched together imperfectly" (193). We could easily substitute the word *hypertext* for "knowing self" in the above quote. Hypertext is always partial; it is stitched together imperfectly and, therefore, resists the teleological urge to achieve what Haraway calls "perfect communication." Perfect communication is totalizing, whereas imperfect communication, or imperfect language, is, in Haraway's words, "a language that is not whole; it is self-consciously spliced" (175). Perfect communication, by contrast, follows a linear, goal-directed, noncontradictory logic.

The life of a cyborg, like a hypertext narrative, has no discernable beginning or end. According to Haraway, the "cyborg has no origin story in the Western sense. [. . .] An origin story in the 'Western', humanist sense depends on the myth of original unity" (150-51). The notion of an original or authoritative reading implies that there was a time before contested interpretations, before a fall into difference and multiplicity. But literary hypertexts have no original reading. The reader always begins *in medias res*. Thus, there is no need to (re)construct an original intention or authoritative interpretation. There is no original story because all readings are different, on the surface of the text as well at deeper hermeneutic levels.

Given its "non-Edenic" creation, the cyborg offers a way out of the *active-masculine-writer/passive-feminine-reader* binary. In mainstream Western cultures, activity and passivity are coded, respectively, as masculine and feminine, but the "cyborg is a creature in a post-gender world" (Haraway 150); that is to say, one aspect of the cyborg's gender-free nature is that it blurs the lines between activity and passivity.[5] Rather than being the passive object of another creator, the cyborg actively participates in its own creation, splicing new "body parts" and "prostheses" into its body all the time—in this way fighting off death or entropy. Moreover, following the logic of the cybernetic feedback loop, it is not clear "who makes and who is made in the relation between human and machine" (Haraway 177). In the feedback loop between machine and animal, metal and flesh, mind and matter, creation is not linear or one-way. Cyborg creation *cycles*; it doesn't begin or end.

If it is true that "[w]riting is pre-eminently the technology of cyborgs" (Haraway 176), then it follows that hypertext must be also a cyborg technology, especially considering its facility in foregrounding semiotic gaps and disallowing perfect communication. Haraway argues, "The feminist dream of a common language, like all dreams for a perfectly true language [. . .] is totalizing" (173). The "common language" implies, in linguistic terms, identity between signifier and signified; that is, the signified is *present* in the signifier. But hypertext, being full of gaps, is inherently partial. Thus,

[5] cf. Barbara Biesecker's claim that "If feminists working in the history of Rhetoric could deconstruct the all-too-easy bipolarization of the active and the passive, we would go a long way toward dismantling the ideology of individualism that monumentalizes some acts and trivializes others" (146-47).

hypertextual partiality prevents perfect communication; there is no original text to re-present or "re-member" (Haraway 150). As Haraway asserts, "The cyborg is resolutely committed to partiality, irony, intimacy, and perversity" (151)

Yet conventional literary text is also partial. As Iser claims, a text's "configurative meaning can be nothing but a *pars pro toto* [partial] fulfillment of the text" (963). In this case, the "configurative meaning" is what I, following Bolter, call a *reading*. Inasmuch as literary texts are multiple, any reading is a partial fulfillment of the text. Similarly, in distinguishing between work and text, Barthes writes, "The work closes in on a signified. [. . .] The text, on the contrary, practices the infinite deferment of the signified" (902). Of course, Iser and Barthes are speaking of literary texts, in particular "modern" literary texts, as opposed to texts that purport simply to communicate facts, truths, or moral lessons, and to do so as clearly or efficiently as possible.

The "permanent partiality" of the (literary) text has important implications for a feminist theorization of hypertext. In a hypertextual space, the Aristotelian logic of noncontradiction is radically subverted. Hypertext foregrounds contradiction, border crossing, and perspectival pluralism. Analogously, Irigaray claims that women "desire at the same time nothing and everything" (1470). This apparently illogical, contradictory process is, Irigaray claims, "the multiple nature of female desire" (1470).[6] As an analogue to female desire, a single hypertext often harbors a number of contradictory texts. In like manner, Sullivan argues that the "multivocality and fragmentation made

possible by hypertext [. . .] enable the hypertext creator to foreground the different parts of her self and to document the contradictions within which females in our culture live" (37). Contradiction and fragmentation, then, are accepted as facts of life, as well facts of the multiple text. Contradiction need not be erased in the name of perfect communication.

Within this gynocentric "economy of desire," the hypertext wreater goes in circles and follows curves and tangents, rather than heading directly toward a predetermined goal. Hypertext is not premised on unmasking a singular truth or reality, or seeing through a surface to a "more real" depth. Hypertextual wreating, in other words, is motivated not by discovery, but by attentive *listening*, along with the articulation of fragmented, dispersed texts. The wreater articulates the fragments (i.e., joins them together) and then listens for the voices that emerge from the text. We might also say that the feminist wreater draws new voices out of the text, or even *speaks the text* herself.

Perfect communication (or "perfect communicators") may not even recognize imperfect communication as communication at all; it is perceived or interpreted as the absence of communication. Phallogocentric (i.e., masculinist, objectivist, unilinear) communication, then, is constructed, to varying degrees, as *present*, while all other forms of communication are constructed as *absent*. Irigaray writes, "Contradictory words seem a little crazy to the logic of reason, and *inaudible* for him who listens with ready-made grids, a code prepared in advance" (1469, emphasis added). Different modes of communication have different logics, and feminists who have found classical,

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[6] I should note that Irigaray is speaking here as a cultural feminist—i.e., as a feminist who foregrounds, and often celebrates, gender differences. Irigaray also, again as a cultural feminist, tends to essential women

Aristotelian logic uninspiring or even oppressive have often chosen to experiment with alternate logics. Experimentation and innovation often then lead to calls for pedagogical reform. As Lunsford remarked to Anzaldua, "the logical has had a stranglehold on the teaching of writing. You have to start with A and end with Z. You can't start with Q" ("Toward" 24). In hypertext, of course, one is free to start and end anywhere.

Hypertextual Affinity and its Political Implications

An important theme in feminist rhetoric and epistemology is affinity. Hence, in departing from mainstream epistemology, Haraway argues for "affinity, not identification" (155). She states that because the partial self is stitched together imperfectly, it is "able to join [or articulate] with another without claiming to be another" (193). The difference between these two principles, in a linguistic context, is that in affinity there are always semiotic gaps—the articulation is imperfect—whereas with identification the bond between signifier and signified is complete and total. Hayles's principle of "relationality" is also premised on the existence of gaps ("FM" 8). Relationality, unlike complete identification, leaves gaps, or spaces for new connections and affiliations, as well as the flexibility to disengage from current connections. Relational bonds, or links, can be easily broken and reassembled in new ways. By contrast, complete identification without gaps is static and totalizing. Relationality, in other words, is founded on affinity rather than identification.

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across races and social classes.

At this juncture I must point out a terminological difficulty. For readers familiar with Kenneth Burke, there may be some confusion when they encounter Haraway's argument for "affinity, not identification" (155). *Identification* is the key term in Burkean rhetoric. Successful rhetoric, or the successful rhetorical text, forges a sense of social identification, or solidarity, among a collection of people. Rhetoric also forges an identification between rhetor and audience. But even when Burke speaks of identification, he appears to be referring to the same principle that Haraway calls "affinity." In *A Rhetoric of Motives*, Burke wrote, "A is not identical with his colleague, B. But insofar as their interests are joined, A is *identified* with B" (20). Burke, then, makes a firm distinction between being *identified with* and being *identical to*, and being *identical to* (i.e., identity) is what Haraway refers to dismissively as "identification." Thus, the terminological confusion between Burke and Haraway is cleared up if we read (or misread) Haraway's words as *affinity, not identity*. For Burke as well as Haraway the condition of being *identified with* another is rhetorically preferable to be *identical to* another.

Affinity, or Burkean identification, loosely binds collectivities together. The audience of a particular rhetorical performance may feel a sense of kinship based upon a shared experience. Affinity also (loosely) binds political movements and organizations together; consequently, affinity plays an important role in feminism. A collectivity based on affinity may also be quite temporary or opportunistic (i.e., kairotic), insofar as it comes together for a tactical purpose and disbands once the purpose is met. However, the realization of affinity may be problematic in a hypertextual environment. That is, the

multiple text may hamper or at least complicate the development of affinity between readers, inasmuch as each reader instantiates her own text and different texts may be mutually contradictory.

At this point a question arises: If in the encounter with a hypertext each reader (or wreater) instantiates her own text in the act of reading and no two texts are ever alike, how is a communal experience, or communication, possible? Sacred texts and stories have always bound communities together, and secular texts (e.g., *The Declaration of Independence*, *The U.S. Constitution*, *The Communist Manifesto*)[7] have served as the foundation of nations. But is the primeval, "magical," community-building ritual of listening to myths and folktales or reading a common text negated in a hypertextual space? And in political terms, how is collaborative feminist action possible if each individual is reading a different text? These questions boil down the problem of whether hypertext contributes to social fragmentation, which would then exacerbate oppression by powerful groups who are not handicapped by fragmentation. If hypertext isolates individuals, then readers of hypertext could be very easily divided and conquered.

Since its inception, feminism has been furthered by rhetorically effective texts (e.g., *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, the Seneca Falls *Declaration of Sentiments*, "The Yellow Wallpaper," *The Second Sex*, *The Feminine Mystique*, "The Laugh of the Medusa," and of course many, many more). But can a literary hypertext such as Shelley Jackson's *Patchwork Girl*, Carolyn Guyer's *Quibbling*, or J. Yellowlees Douglas's "I

[7] I recognize that many people might consider *The Communist Manifesto* and similar texts sacred. Thus, there is some slippage in the secular/sacred binary.

Have Said Nothing," do the same? In short, how can "the text" function rhetorically or politically if there is no text but only *readings*?

This dilemma is rooted in a misunderstanding of the identification process that occurs by reading the same work. The text itself is a function of interpretation, and the "notion of 'same text' is the product of the possession by two or more readers of similar interpretive strategies" (Fish 988). Fish claims that "perfect agreement [. . .] would require texts to have a status independent of interpretation" (989). The goal, then, as I see it, is not to read the same text—that is, to interpret a text in the same way—but to map the intersections and divergences among readings. If a group of readers, such as members of literature seminar, engages with a hypertext narrative, they will each instantiate a different text from their particular readings. And if at points during the reading process, the group comes together to discuss their individual readings, this process, for the most part, would logically consist of exploring intertextual and intratextual gaps, as opposed to constructing a single consensus reading. There is no need to fully bridge the gaps or "suture" them tightly together. On the contrary, the readers' time would be better spent listening for the voices that become audible when textual fragments edge against each other or when textual gaps slide open. As I argue later in this chapter, tightly sutured gaps serve to silence a text, or to impose a single, hegemonic reading upon a text. In a tightly sutured text, "still, small voices" cannot rise to the surface and escape like, at the risk of mixing metaphors, oxygen carried in bubbles.

For contemporary feminists, a unified, consensus reading of a text is not always useful. A text, in other words, does not necessarily have to forge a sense of collective unity. In Haraway's words, "The permanent partiality of feminist points of view has consequences for our expectations of forms of political organizations and participation. We do not need to work as a totality in order to work well" (173). This statement suggests that the assumption that feminist politics must be based on a single, tightly bound feminism is *passe*. Just as feminism has become feminism*s*, multiple texts are now welcomed.

If the "text is plural," as Barthes claimed (902), then feminist praxis does not necessarily have be to be founded on a stable, unified, or original text. The plural text is, paradoxically, full of gaps; it is stitched together imperfectly. In other words, the "intertextual in which every text is held [. . .] is not to be confused with some origin of the text" (Barthes 903). Origins, in fact, are not always relevant. Hence, the point I wish to make is that multiperspectival, multilinear hypertext is not necessarily politically inefficacious. In fact, insofar as it promotes an interrogation of dominant modes of textuality, such as by emphasizing parataxis, hypertext can be quite rhetorically and politically subversive.

Hypertext as *Mestiza*

The work of Gloria Anzaldua, which I have touched on previously, also has much to tell us about the principles of partiality and multiplicity. Singular perspectives may be deconstructed, or taken apart, and then perhaps reconstructed with loose connections that

will facilitate further deconstruction when the need arises. Anzaldua stated, "The act of writing for me is [a] kind of dismembering of everything I am feeling, taking it apart to examine it and then reconstituting it or recomposing it in a new way" (10). The dismembering, or perhaps emasculating, of the text is not an end in itself, but merely part of the process writing/reading.

Anzaldua's view of the rhetor diverges sharply from the mainstream, masculinist prototype. "The rhetor that Anzaldua makes central to her rhetorical theory is the *mestiza*, the woman of mixed blood who straddles multiple cultural boundaries" (Foss, Foss, and Griffin 112). In stark contrast to the public man, the ultimate insider, for Anzaldua the most legitimate rhetor is the *outsider*. Hence, Anzaldua's rhetoric is characterized by deconstruction through a radical reversal of the binary oppositions that support cultural hegemonies. "Anzaldua gives centrality, legitimacy, and agency to [the] 'strangers' or 'others' who have been denigrated by the dominant culture. Ultimately [. . .] Anzaldua's notion of the rhetor expands to include anyone who is an outsider" (Foss et al. 112). In discussing Anzaldua's "*mestiza* rhetoric," Lunsford writes that "living in and rendering such contradictions and transformations calls for a new kind of writing. In Anzaldua's case, this means a rich mixture of genres [. . .] weaving images and words from her multiple selves and from many others into a kind of tapestry or patchwork quilt of language ("Toward" 2).[8] Similarly, Page wrote that the "notion [. . .] of textuality as weaving (a restoration of the root meaning of 'text') and of the construction of

[8] The term "patchwork quilt" will have obvious associations for readers of Shelley Jackson's work.

knowledge as a web that has figured prominently in the development of hypertext has also been important in feminist theory" (2). Multilinear hypertext, then, is amenable to the linguistic, metaphorical "weaving" engaged in by writers such as Anzaldua.

Imperfect communication, as discussed by Haraway, is also a prime characteristic of what Anzaldua refers to as a "Borderland," and the main feature of mestiza rhetoric is that the mestiza synthesizes the divergent voices of the Borderland.[9] According to Anzaldua, the *mestiza* must continually "shift out of habitual formations; from convergent thinking, analytical reasoning that tends to use rationality to move toward a single goal (a Western mode), to divergent thinking, characterized by movement away from set patterns and goals and toward a more whole perspective, one that includes rather than excludes" (*Making Face* 378-79). The issue of inclusion/exclusion in important for hypertext theory because, as I have argued previously, hypertext is, for the most part, inclusive; it works against the modernist dichotomies that produce "closures and exclusions" (Code, *RS* 194). Conventional binaries, such as exclusion/inclusion, outside/inside, public/private, masculine/feminine, writing/reading, and center/margin, may be readily deconstructed in hypertextual spaces.

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[9] Anzaldua's terminology can be somewhat confusing, however, because she distinguishes between *borderlands* with a small *b* and *Borderlands* with a capital *B*. Written lowercase, the word refers to a geographic site, such as the 2000 mile long Mexico-U.S. border, "where the Third World grates against the first and bleeds" (Anzaldua 25). Written uppercase, the word is used metaphorically to signify "a state that exists whenever cultural difference exists, whether those cultures involve physical differences such as race, class, or gender or differences that are less tangible—psychological, social, or cultural" (Foss et al. 106). Yet in both kinds of Borderland/borderland communication breaks down and new languages are created. Anzaldua writes that "the Borderlands are physically present wherever two or more cultures edge each other, where people of different races occupy the same territory, where under, lower, middle and upper classes touch, where the space between two individuals shrinks with intimacy" (19). Since I am most concerned with the Borderland as a metaphor, I have opted to use the uppercase form of this term.

Hypertext is a Borderland technology; it has come into being at a site where, in Anzaldua's words, "two or more cultures edge each other" (19). The Borderlands are, in other words, zones of articulation or "contact zones" (Pratt 584). The two primary cultures in this case are the cultures of print literature and computer technology, but postmodern literary theory, feminist rhetoric, feminist epistemology, and similar cultural phenomena may also be tossed into the multicultural mix. Furthermore, the notion of *edging* is paratactic, insofar as side-by-side, nonhierarchical writing spaces edge each other. As Joyce writes, "the web links edgewise" (*Othermindedness* 172). The *mestiza* principle, then, may be combined with hypertext theory and feminist epistemology to generate a new articulation of feminist rhetoric.

Phallomorphism and the Guilty Text

Another way hypertext contributes to a rearticulation of feminist rhetoric is by transforming conventional narrative patterns. A primary assumption underpinning the argument I make in this section is that the traditional literary narrative reflects, at least to some extent, male genital anatomy and sexual response. This "phallomorphic" narrative follows the well-worn, linear pattern of initial scene setting, character introduction, plot complication, climax, and resolution. The methods of science, rhetorical criticism, and literary criticism may also be characterized as phallic. Janice Hocker Rushing notes that the scientific method has metaphorical associations with the hunt, artistic discovery, and sexual penetration (157). And insofar as the disciplines of rhetorical, cultural, or literary criticism aspire to the status of the "hard" sciences, the "critic, above all, must be *in*

control (Rushing 160). The good, masculinist critic must stay "on top" of the text; he must successfully "nail" its meaning. In speaking of the aggressiveness of criticism, Rushing refers to "ever more sophisticated theoretical lenses that 'open up' what the text is presumed coyly to conceal" (160). Thus, rather than following the aggressive practice of conventional criticism and scholarship, we might choose to articulate textual fragments and watch for sparks of insight to fly up. This process amounts to a joining of hermeneutics and heuristics; which is to say that textual interpretation works in partnership with invention. It must be emphasized that textual seams or gaps need not be forcefully pried open. In other words, we may distinguish between listening to a text and the more aggressive, invasive searching for meaning or compelling a text to "talk," or even to "talk!"

Mainstream academic criticism is a product of the Enlightenment, and it should be analyzed in this historical context. Yet in any critique of the Enlightenment or modernist ideology, we must acknowledge that the scientific method and modernism have brought innumerable blessings for women as well as men, e.g., modern sanitation and healthcare, democracy, civil liberties, state-supported education, and so forth.[10] In speaking of the scientist as a hunter, Rushing argues that "the Enlightenment and its afterglow have made things better for humankind in innumerable ways. But a radical reversal happens in the scientific era when the hunter is less concerned with sacred rites, and so feels less and less connected to the prey or to his weapon as a part of himself" (157). The scientific

method becomes oppressive when the scientist slips into the role of voyeur and sadist—that is, when the ancient sacredness of the hunt is *profaned* and transformed into a sadistic urge to dominate and, ultimately, to destroy one's prey.

Under the influence of the Cartesian subject/object split, the traditional scientist is, first of all, a voyeur because he privileges vision above the other senses. Hence, what Freud called "scopophilia," pleasure in looking or gazing, is central the Cartesian worldview. Scopophilia is, of course, deeply gendered. As Laura Mulvey claims, "In a world ordered by sexual imbalance, pleasure in looking has been split between active/male and passive/female" (1448). Moreover, the Cartesian likes to *control* what he watches and, as the urge to control increases, the voyeur becomes a sadist (Rushing 154-55). In short, the ancient sacredness of the scientific enterprise, known by alchemists such as Paracelsus, is largely forgotten by the modernist.[11] Under the influence of modernism and its ever-advancing technology, science has become hard, rigid (or rigorous), and aggressive—that is, phallic.

Guilty Texts and Guilty Women

The tenets of modernism have given rise to a phenomenon that I refer to as the *guilty text*, i.e., the text that is assumed to be hiding a secret, and therefore must be

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[10] I must note here that the advances of the West have often been gained at the expense of Third World nations and indigenous peoples. See Linda Tuhiwai Smith's *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (London: Zed Books, 1999). I refer to this text later in this study.

[11] Paracelsus was the most famous sixteenth-century alchemist, as such participant in the ancient hermetic tradition. For a history of the battle between the scientific visions of Francis Bacon and the Paracelsian seventeenth-century alchemists, see Evelyn Fox Keller's *Reflections of Gender and Science*, chapter 3.

"interrogated" until it gives up, or "puts out," all that it contains. The guilty text must be compelled to *tell the truth*. Mulvey, drawing on Lacanian theory, writes that "voyeurism [. . .] has association with sadism: pleasure lies in ascertaining guilt (immediately associated with castration), asserting control and subjugating the guilty person through punishment and forgiveness" (1450). Thus, the modernist has all the attributes of the patriarchal superego (1452). Mulvey's parenthetic comment on castration makes it clear that the guilty text is coded feminine, or at least is emasculated.

The text may be construed as an extension of nature, as suggested by Susan Bordo's statement that "the medieval cosmos whose destruction gave birth to the modern sensibility was a *mother*-cosmos, and the soul which Descartes drained from the natural world was a female soul" (642). A growing body of scholarship has shown that nature under the Enlightenment was transformed from a mother to a whore—no longer worshipped as the giver and sustainer of life, but investigated, controlled, an commodified, all in the same of scientific progress (Bordo 642-46; Keller, *Reflections* 33-65. According to the modernist view, nature generates disease, such as the plague that decimated seventeenth-century Europe; therefore, she must be tamed by scientific methods. Nature, whose microcosm is human nature, is also responsible for war, starvation, and brutality. As such, nature lacks order and reason. As a "whore," nature has been thoroughly commodified, in the post-gender world of the cyborg, "[n]ature and culture are reworked; the one can no longer be the resource for appropriation or

incorporation by the other" (Haraway 150). But, again, the cyborg is not the passive creature or commodity of another.

The guilty text, like the guilty woman, is found lacking—that is, lacking the phallic signifier. Mulvey writes, "The paradox of the phallocentrism [. . .] is that it depends on the image of the castrated woman to give order and meaning to its world. [. . .] it is her lack that produces the phallus as a symbolic presence" (1445). That is, feminine *absence* makes possible masculine *presence*. Mulvey goes on to claim, "Ultimately, the meaning of woman is sexual difference, the visually ascertainable absence of a penis" (1450). By extension, hypertext, insofar as it is found *lacking* with respect to linear organization and coherence, is apt to be treated as a *guilty text*. The reason for this negative judgment is that hypertexts, like women, are judged according to a hegemonic, masculine standard—the masculine default value. As long as the penis is the great signifier, man will be coded positive and woman negative. Likewise, as long as linear organization is a primary attribute, or signifier, of a rhetorically effective text, then hypertext will be found lacking. Hypertext, according to conventional logic, would not be classified as text at all, but rather as the *absence* of text. To redress these prejudices, women and hypertext must be accepted on their own terms, not judged according to an arbitrary external standard. Just as woman is not *not-man*, hypertext is not *not-print*.

While the phallomorphic narrative is unilinear or singular, the hypertext narrative is multilinear. A number of writers, men as well as women, have experimented with narratives that feature multiple climaxes and deferred closure, which is arguably more congruent with female erotic experience. Irigaray, for instance, premises much of her

rhetoric on the dispersed, multiple, decentralized quality of female sexuality. According to Irigaray, "woman does not have a sex. She has at least two of them, but they cannot be identified as ones [*sic*]. Indeed she has many more of them than that. Her sexuality, always at least double, is in fact plural. [. . .] Plural as the manner in which current texts are written" (1469). Admittedly, Irigaray uses the term "woman" in the abstract, but this usage allows her to exploit the metaphorical richness associated with Western conceptions of "the feminine." Irigaray plays with these metaphors, turning masculinist assumptions on their heads.

If we follow Irigaray's argument, phallomorphic narrative is singular, while feminist, or "gynomorphic," narrative is plural and paratactic. Hypertext, with its inclusive quality, is very well suited for plural narrative, just as the decentralized quality of female sexuality is analogous to the spatial dispersal characteristic of multilinear hypertext. The plural text is produced through juxtaposition, or placing loosely connected elements side-by-side. By "loosely connected" I mean one-to-many linking, which creates multilinearity, as opposed to the "tight" connections of one-to-one, unilinear linking. Multilinear hypertext, then, is not designed to reflect phallomorphism, which Irigaray defines as "The *one* of form, the individual sex, proper name, literal meaning" (1468). Parataxis lends itself to multiplicity and dispersal, rather than the phallic singularity of one truth, one God, and one way to read a text.[12]

[12] This line of thinking is not an endorsement of biological essentialism; it simply represents the application of a different metaphor. I do not take Irigaray's words to mean to women think or write in a certain way because of their genital anatomy. One caveat I have, though, is that Irigaray's dichotomization of female and male sexuality does not hold up to scrutiny. While it is true that men are not generally capable multiple orgasms, men, like women, do have many erogenous zones. What Irigaray says about women—i.e., that

Irigaray strives to deconstruct hegemonic masculinist metaphors, which is far from a trivial project. As I asserted earlier, metaphors are condensed arguments. Hence, as Anzaldua argues, changing the world may begin with changing our metaphors: "The basic rhetorical option Anzaldua advocates [. . .] is shifting metaphors. Shifting metaphors means changing perspectives—making new connections and seeing in new ways—through the creative use of language" (Foss et al. 115). Metaphors, for Anzaldua, are created through *la facultad*, "the faculty to see in surface phenomena the meaning of deeper realities, to see the deep structure below the surface" (60). Similarly, with respect to metaphor, Page urges us to

> bear in mind that all language is shot through with metaphors, many derived from the body, and that some of the boldest interventions by innovative women writers have been through an insistence on speaking the body in new terms as a way of breaking the hold of traditional discourses that denigrate and demonize [i.e., judge guilty] the female body. (7)

The body, in other words, is an extremely rich metaphorical terrain; therefore, focusing attention on these metaphors, deliberately shifting and reversing oppressive binaries, may be a productive means of changing social structures.

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they have sex organs just about everywhere (1469)—could also be said of men. It is just that men, insofar as they are conditioned by a phallic culture, focus most of their libidinal energy on the penis. Thus, a distinction must be drawn between male physiology and the cultural construction of male sexuality, or embodiment and the body. The physiological reality of *sex* and the cultural construction of *gender* are not identical, in other words. Nonetheless, within the domain of gender, Irigaray's metaphoric linking of erotic experience to textuality remains quite provocative, and I will continue to mine this metaphorical terrain as I construct a feminist theory of hypertext.

Hypertextual Recurrence and Contiguity

As indicated by my argument to this point, a rearticulation of feminist rhetoric informed by hypertext theory and feminist epistemology must pay particular attention to the principle of *parataxis*. Hypertext is a paratactic textuality. And two concepts closely related to *parataxis* are recurrence and contiguity.

As Joyce, Landow, Douglas, Sullivan, and others have observed, hypertext involves a great deal of recurrence, or redundancy, as the reader returns to previously encountered lexias and then sets out in new directions. Joyce even argues, "Hypertext fiction in some fundamental sense depends upon rereading" (*Othermindedness* 137). Although the hypertext wreater revisits familiar lexias, in different contexts the lexias are read differently—they signify differently. Even in the case of conventional text, the reader makes associations across the text, often thumbing backward through the text to locate a previously read, associated idea. Hence, even conventional reading is very often recursive. In the case of hypertext, however, recursive reading is taken to another level; that is, recursive reading becomes primary rather than secondary.

Hayles writes, "Pattern can be recognized through redundancy or repetition of elements. If there is only repetition, however, no new information is imparted; the intermixture of randomness rescues pattern from sterility" ("VB" 78). Recurrence creates patterns, but hypertext involves a substantial element of randomness as well. Thus, hypertextual recurrence creates a *patterned randomness* that serves to subvert the logocentric unilinear narrative. As noted previously, Joyce invokes "the power of

recurrence" (20) and "the rhythm of recurrence" (*Othermindedness* 120). Hypertextual recurrence serves to create the sense of a relatively coherent, readable, if not unified text. Or stated differently, recursive reading allows one to construct patterns in the text, and these patterns may be read as several coherent texts within a single hypertext. Sullivan recognized the role of recurrence as she observed that feminists often "value contextualization and recognize that different contexts provide different perspectives on the same information. One way contextualization is accomplished in hypertext is through repetition" (34); that is to say, recurrence allows one to read the same lexia in different contexts, or from different epistemic locations, and thus experience a familiar lexia as if for the first time. Hypertextual wreating is, therefore, "multiperspectival" (Sullivan 34).

Touching on Topoi

Hypertextual discourse is recursive and dispersed, as the writer or speaker (or rhetor) touches on many items or issues rather than focusing exclusively on a single topic, or "sticking to the point." In an interesting parallel, Irigaray writes, "In her statements—at least when she dares to speak out—woman retouches herself constantly. She barely separates from herself some chatter, an exclamation, a half-secret, a sentence left in suspense—When she returns to it, it is only to set out again from another point of pleasure or pain" (1470). Irigaray goes on to write, "For when 'she' says something, it is already no longer identical to what she means. Moreover, her statements are never identical to anything. Their distinguishing feature is one of contiguity. They touch (*upon*). And when they wander too far from this nearness, she stops and begins again

from 'zero': her body-sex organ" (1470). The hypertext wreater repeatedly touches on lexias, just as "woman," according to Irigaray, repeatedly, or recursively, touches on her own statements.

In Irigaray's prose, there is a sense of touching on an idea or topic, going off in another direction, and then returning to the previous idea (or place/*topos*). Through this process, unilinear (phallomorphic) progression is subverted, and a shifting, sliding network of signifiers is constructed. Of course, this is exactly what occurs with hypertext: the wreater touches on one lexia, leaves to pursue a link, and often returns to the where she started, only to depart again on another tangent. Or, as an alternative to the conventional, spatialized journey metaphor, we might say that the wreater, rather than leaving and returning to lexias, simply brings lexias before herself in different sequences and places them in different contexts. But whatever metaphor one chooses, hypertextual wreating is highly tangential; finding the shortest distance between two points is not the goal.

Along with recurrence or recursiveness, hypertext is structured according to the principle of contiguity, or paratactic juxtaposition, and as such hypertext is analogous to Irigaray's representation of female sexuality. Irigaray writes, "A woman 'touches herself' constantly without anyone being able to forbid her to do so, for her sex is composed of two lips which embrace continually" (1467). We might say that these two lips have an *affinity* for one another, and the principle of affinity is analogous to contiguity as well as associative logic. Associated ideas have an affinity for one another, as if there were some sort of magnetic attraction between them. The principle of associative logic has been

associated with hypertext (or at least with the memex concept) from the start with Bush's concept of associative indexing.

Insofar as it features associative contiguity, hypertext has a great deal in common with Barthes' modern literary text. Barthes claims, "The logic of the Text is not comprehensive (define 'what the work means') but metonymic: the activity of associations, contiguities (902). In connection with Irigaray's imagery, two lexias, wherever they are in the hypertext—if we can speak of them being anywhere—can be as close together as the labia. When Irigaray describes "woman," she could just as easily be describing hypertext: "'She' [. . .] is called temperamental, incomprehensible, perturbed, capricious—not to mention her language in which 'she' goes off in all directions and in which 'he' is unable to discern the coherence of any meaning" (1469). Irigaray goes on to characterizes woman as "never being simply one," and she compares woman with "a sort of universe in expansion for which no limits could be fixed and which for all that, would not be incoherency" (1470). In these statements, Irigaray is describing a paratactic structure.

Rhetoric itself may be characterized as preeminently paratactic. Jarratt explains that the Aristotelian rhetorical proofs (i.e., enthymeme, analogy, and maxim) "are often seen, especially from the point of view of philosophy or science, as inferior, incomplete distortions of the purer logic of the *Organon*, and the hypotactic structures of formal logic becomes the distinguishing feature of rational discourse" (xxii). Thus, in the Aristotelian view, *the rhetorical proofs are to the logical proofs as women are to men*, inasmuch as women were said to be underdeveloped men. Moreover, *parataxis* has the

all, but a temporal gap, or *pause* ("Conclusions" 196). No matter how fast the connection or how "seamless" the link, there will always be a pause between lexias or web pages. "The pause may be measured by ever-smaller fractions of a microsecond, but it is ultimately irreducible, because *it has priority over the spatiality of the lexias it joins*" (196). In other words, the spatial gap between lexias, which we are familiar with from our experience with print, may be eliminated by hyperlinking, but the temporal gap, like the poor, will always be with us.

The pauses between lexias are similar to the pauses in conversation; that is, following a mouse click, the reader must wait for the text to "answer" with a new lexia. A simple example may clarify this trope: In Joyce's *afternoon,* at the bottom of the first lexia, labeled "Begin," the text poses a question to the reader: "Do you want to hear about it?" A different lexia appears next depending on whether the reader clicks on *yes* or *no.* But these kinds of overt devices are not necessary to produce the conversational quality of hypertext. Indeed, every lexia features an implicit question: *Do you want to continue reading?* The main difference between this implicit question in hypertext and the same implicit question asked on every page of a conventional book is that with hypertext there is no promise that the reader will ever reach completion or closure. Literary hypertexts usually cycle rather than concluding. Thus, the real unspoken question is, *Even though you will never find an end to this text, do you still want to continue?* Another question, which has to do with the principle of recurrence, is, *Even though you have already read this lexia, do you want to read it again?*

Hypertextual wreating is not motivated by a singular goal, and in this sense wreating is like play—the play of conversation. As Barthes writes, "the Text is bound to *jouissance*, that is the pleasure without separation" (904).[14] By extension, hypertext is analogous to female autoeroticism, or a woman deriving sexual pleasure from herself and for herself rather than being "use-value" for a man. Irigaray writes that "woman is traditionally use-value for man, exchange value among men. Merchandise, then. [. . .] How can this object of transaction assert a right to pleasure without extricating itself from the established commercial system?" (1471). Lesbianism might be also seen in this light as an expression of play—perhaps a serious, subversive kind of play that extricates a woman from patriarchal bondage.

Plural texts are full of gaps and internal contradictions; they are not a *seamless*. Like many feminists, Richard Miller, in the following quote, emphasizes the importance of not glossing over contradictions:

> When students are presented with the idea that successful mastery of the writing process produces a smooth voyage to clarity, they come to understand that anything that stands in the way of clarity must be expunged: ambiguity, obscure references, contradictions, paradoxes, tangential thoughts—the fundamental material [. . .] of lived experience and of one's mental life. (23)

Hypertextual wreating is not a "smooth voyage to clarity," and as such it subverts the perfectionist drive of modernism. In taking the possibility, as well as the desirability, of

[14] The French term *jouissance* may be translated as joy or bliss.

resources necessary for the maintenance or alteration of power" (315). The rhetor has knowledge and, according to modernism, knowledge is power. As Francis Bacon asserts in his *Aphorisms*, "Knowledge and human power are synonymous."[15] Power, furthermore, is typically defined as ability to control one's environment, which is coded feminine in Western culture (Rushing 161-62). But, as I have suggested repeatedly, it may be time now to shift metaphors. As I hope to demonstrate in the remainder of this chapter and in subsequent chapters, it is possible to speak of empowerment without resorting to masculinist rhetoric.

Within the field of rhetoric and composition, the principle of empowering student writers has been articulated predominately within the context of expressivist pedagogies (e.g., the work of Peter Elbow and Donald Murray). Jarratt observes that the work of "the expressivist school of the sixties and seventies advanced the democratic goal of giving students a voice" (85). And, despite conservative reversals since the 1970s, "many compositionists continue to explore the role of the writing classroom in empowering students as participants in democracy" (Jarratt 85).

The limitations of expressivism and other individualistic composition theories have to with negotiating the space between the individual and the various, often intersecting communities that individuals live, and find meaning, within. Jarratt notes that a "powerful ideology of individualism works against a sense of community both in the classroom and outside" (88). Citing the research of Linda Flower and John Hayes, whose

[15] *Novum Organun. Aphorisms* 3: 345-37. Available online: http://history.hanover.edu/texts/Bacon/aphor.html.

cognitive model focuses on the single individual, Jarratt speaks of the "priority of mental activity over group communication" (89) Jarratt goes on to speak of "a general approach to writing instruction today [1991] which, in tune with a society immersed in an ideology of individualism, looks too narrowly at the single writer as the site of language production" (89). Similarly, Lunsford and Ede claim that for Elbow, "expressing personal authenticity requires not social interaction but mining the depths of the self, searching inside the self for a unique voice" ("Collaborative Authorship" 691). Not only is such pedagogy epistemologically suspect, but it ignores the preeminent role of collective effort in democratic politics. Insofar as they do not address social power and control, individualistic composition pedagogies, like the epistemology of medium-sized objects, are politically naïve; that is, expressivism and mainstream epistemology may claim to be apolitical, but they are not.

Individualists appear to disagree with Aristotle's notion of human beings as political creatures, and Aristotle's socio-political orientation relates to his definition of rhetorical power. According to Sharan Daniel, "Aristotle defined rhetoric as a *dynamis*, translated as 'faculty' (at the height of faculty psychology) but also as 'power.' [. . .] Rhetoric in this tradition is [. . .] the art that powers our communal life." By contrast, the liberal humanist notion of empowerment is *rights-centered*; it is concerned primarily with "enabling individuals to claim their rights and only secondarily with issues of collective concern" (Daniel, personal communication). Power, in other words, is constructed as property, something that can be owned, shared, lost, or taken (Gore, "What" 57-59).

Feminism is about much more than claiming personal rights.[16] As I argued in the previous chapter, feminism is a different way of thinking. Yet under late capitalism, empowerment is typically equated with consumer power, and the rhetoric of rights, in slighting duty and responsibility, often boils down the right to consume more or higher quality goods and services; however, consumerism does not translate well to feminist political engagement.

The rhetoric of empowerment has been part of hypertext theory since its inception. In "As We May Think," Vannevar Bush wrote, "Of what lasting benefit has been man's use of science and of the new instruments which his research brought into existence? First, they have increased his control of his material environment" (101). Bush then goes on to claim, "For mature thought there is no mechanical substitute. But creative thought and essentially repetitive thought are very different things. For the latter there are, and may be, powerful mechanical aids" (104). The memex, then, was to be a tool to lighten the mechanical aspects of scientific or intellectual work. The editor's introduction to Bush's article states, "For years inventions have extended man's physical powers rather than the powers of his mind [. . .] Now, says Dr. Bush, instruments are at hand which, if properly developed, will give man access to and command over the inherited knowledge of the ages" (101). The emphasis, in the rhetoric of Bush and the *Atlantic Monthly* editor, on placing knowledge under man's *command and control*, positions the concept of the

[16] In my critique of the rhetoric of empowerment, my position is closer to *cultural feminism* (e.g., Cixous, Irigaray, Kristeva) than to *liberal feminism* (e.g., Friedan).

memex is safely within the mainstream of Western scientific (or scientistic), as well as militaristic, thinking.[17]

Within the context of the dominant masculinist worldview, technology extends man's power. Thus, the preoccupation with power enhancement or empowerment appears to be a characteristic of the machine age, or the industrial, modernist era, inasmuch as mechanistic force is measured in terms of power—horsepower, steam power, watts, and so forth. The more forcefully a machine can *act on* matter, or transform matter, the more power it has. Hence, the ideology of empowerment would appear to be rooted in mechanistic assumptions. For instance, in Bush's vision of the memex, information, knowledge, or scientific data appears to be a kind of *matter*. The memex, then, was envisioned as a tool to *act on* knowledge. My own position is that knowledge is a dynamic conversational pattern, a process rather than a product. Knowledge, in other words, is a constituent in a feedback loop between the self and others; it comes into being in the space between people, as opposed to being property that can be possessed or held inside an individual. Knowledge and power, then, are both relational.

My argument is that theorizations of hypertext that employ the rhetoric of empowerment are essentially modernist theories, and thus of limited value in promoting

[17] Along with links to Francis Bacon, there are obvious military associations with the terms "command and control." Yet, aside from observing that Vannevar Bush, as an appointee of President Roosevelt, headed up America's wartime scientific work, I am not prepared to explore this aspect of Bush's rhetoric at any length. In a preface to Bush's article, an *Atlantic Monthly* editor wrote, "As Director of the Office of Scientific Research and Development, Dr. Vannevar Bush has coordinated the activities of some six thousand leading American scientists in the application of science to warfare. In this significant article he holds up an incentive for scientists when the fighting has ceased. He urges that men of science should then turn to the massive task of making more accessible our bewildering store of knowledge" (101).

feminist aims. I believe that rather than asking whether or not hypertext empowers its users or how it can empower us, we ought to ask *how it changes us*—that is, how it changes individual readers and writers, pedagogies, educational institutions, and societies. Hypertext cannot simply be used a tool; users (or wreaters) engage in a mutually transformative relationship with this technology. Hence, rather than constructing hypertext as a personally empowering technology, it would be more congruent with feminism to articulate hypertext as a *relational technology*. Like Barbara McClintock with her maize plants, the hypertext wreater develops a relationship with the text, as opposed to being engaged in a battle for control with a text or an author. As discussed above, the relationship between the wreater and the text features "conversational pauses." In this dialogue, the wreater develops a unique relationship with a *living text*.

In addition to the pauses where a reader silently ponders or interprets the text, which occur with conventional text as well as hypertext, in a read-write interface such as Storyspace the wreater's contribution to the conversation may be visibly inscribed in the text. And the wreater's visible inscription within the text, or the ability of the wreater to write herself into the text, *marks* a major difference between hypertext and conventional text. Here is perhaps where the shift from the *oratorical*, or one-way, rhetoric of conventional print to the *conversational* mode of hypertext is most evident. While readers of a conventional text can write *on the pages*, they cannot write *in the text*. By contrast, hypertext wreaters are able to write *in* the text, not merely *on* the pages. I develop this argument at length in the next chapter.

The read-write hypertext interface allows the wreater to experience hypertext as a technology that opens up spaces for multiple, often contradictory voices. A literary hypertext often exhibits multiple narrative voices at the outset, and the wreater is free to write even more voices or divergent perspectives into the text. Thus, the conversation metaphor may be extended, inasmuch as the conversation between wreater and text is more like seminar or colloquy than a dyadic conversation; that is, the conversation, or discussion, becomes multiperspectival. From a feminist perspective, then, working within a loosely linked hypertext is more interesting or compelling than gaining power over a text or over an author.

The notion of gaining power *over* a text, or the rhetoric of empowerment, is associated with the masculinist metaphor of the hunt. And following an interesting metaphorical logic, the scientific method becomes a *weapon* and nature becomes the *prey* (Rushing 158). More specifically, within the field of rhetorical criticism, method equates to theory, and the text is the prey targeted by the theory-wielding hunter-critic. Rushing analyzes this metaphorical pattern on four levels: (1) the hunter uses a *weapon* to act on the prey; (2) the critic uses a *method* to act on the text; (3) the gazer uses a *look* to act on an object; and (4) the knower uses *knowledge* to act on the known (158).

This metaphorical pattern can be further extended so that the hypertext-equipped computer becomes the weapon and online "content" the prey. The *science-as-hunt* metaphorical pattern, then, generates the following assertion: *The wreater uses the computer to act on content.* With Internet access, the computer may also be treated as a weapon, perhaps a *net*, for capturing knowledge/power. Such a metaphorical construction

is quite congruent with the paradigm that posits hypertext technology as a tool that empowers readers and increases their control over the text. Such an "empowered" reader acts *on* rather *in* the text. And *acting on* the text is associated with *controlling* the text.

For Bush, Nelson, Landow, Lanham, and other theorists, hypertext technology enhances the reader's control over the text and, by extension, control over knowledge. Thus, a fundamental tenet of humanities-based hypertext theory is that hypertext is reader-centered; it frees the reader from the author's control, transforming the comparatively passive reader into an active *wreater*. Moreover, the reader-centeredness of hypertext goes beyond reader-response theory, according to which, even in the case of conventional print text, each reader constructs, perhaps even "writes," her own text. Thus, reader-centeredness is often associated with democratization and the dissemination of power, as in Landow's claim that a "fully implemented embodiment of a networked hypertext system [. . .] *obviously* creates empowered readers, ones who have more power relative both to the texts they read and to the authors of these texts than readers of print materials have" (273, emphasis added).

As we should expect, not every hypertext theorist espouses the rhetoric of empowerment. J. Yellowlees Douglas, for instance, labels Lanham a "technological determinist" for his claim that hypertext is "inherently democratic" ("Nature" 326). Douglas argues that "hypertext is not inherently democratic or liberating or egalitarian any more than it is implicitly more limiting, more authoritarian than print" (*EOB* 147) Despite the ideological seductiveness, from a democratic or oppositional perspective, of the notion of the hypertext wreater wresting control away from a culturally privileged,

often white male, author, hypertext readers rarely have the same control over a text as an author does. A hypertext author may contrive to frustrate readers and limit the ways in which a text may be read; that is to say, a hypertext author can be every bit as dominating or controlling as the author of conventional print text. For instance, by using Storyspace's guard field function, an author may prevent a reader from seeing lexia B unless she has first read lexia A. A particular author might find it enjoyable and/or aesthetically effective to devise quite complex guard fields, and such authorial control is not necessarily a bad thing, as many readers derive pleasure from "surrendering" to the language or "falling under the spell" of the author. As mentioned previously, aesthetic pleasure often derives from surrendering, or at least *partially* surrendering, to an artist's magical control.

As Harpold discusses, the act of reading any text involves a contract between reader and text; the reader agrees to expend time and energy reading the text, and the text promises to reveal a relatively coherent meaning: "Our readings are founded on an implicit guarantee that our engagement with text will lead to an end, a resolution that repeats and informs the beginning" ("Conclusions" 194). In literature, film, and drama we engage in the well-known "willing suspicion of disbelief" because we expect a pay off in the end—i.e., an answer to a question posed by the work.[18]

[18] We might compare Kenneth Burke's notion of a text as an answer to a question posed by a particular rhetorical situation (*Philosophy of Literary Form* 1).

To experience aesthetic pleasure, we willingly submit to the power, or magic, of the artist. Magic is founded on relatedness or connections—i.e., connections between spirit, mind, and body; between human beings; between human beings and Nature; between humans, animals, and plants; between humans and stellar bodies; between the living and the dead. Susan Bordo writes, "[T]he medieval sense of relatedness to the world, as we know from its art, literature, and philosophy, had not depended on 'objectivity' but on continuity between human and physical realms, on the interpenetration, through meanings, of self and world" (639). James George Frazer, in *The Golden Bough*, refers to this principle of relatedness as *sympathetic magic*, i.e., the belief that entities can affect one another at a distance without a material medium. But in the seventeenth century, Descartes took on the mission of wiping out what early-modern scientists deemed superstitious, irrational (or pre-rational) thinking, just as Plato had targeted the mythic thinking of Greek antiquity.

Magic should not be overlooked by rhetorical studies. While magic has often been considered a primitive science, Burke characterized magic as "primitive rhetoric" (*Rhetoric of Motives* 43). While rhetoric, Burke claimed, is the "use of addressed language to *induce action in people*," magic is the "use of addressed language to *induce motion in things* (42). Magic, furthermore, is not merely used for affecting nature; it has a socializing, community-building function. Accordingly, Burke also referred to "the socializing aspects of magic" (43). The ancient rhapsode's magical stories and songs may

have had, above all, a socializing function; they served to pass along cultural lore and mores.

But rhapsodic rhetorical "magic" appears to have evolved, under the sophists and later rhetoricians, into the principle of rhetorical power (Jarratt 22-23). And this practice later became institutionalized as administrative rhetoric (McKerrow 315). Rhetors, under this model, strove to control their audiences. In other words, "Power traditionally is conceptualized in rhetorical theory as the rhetor's ability to dominate—to have the rhetor's beliefs prevail and to secure the adherence of audience members to the rhetor's point of view" (Foss et al. 188).

Power and control, however, are not always directed outwardly. The converse of rhetorical power is self-control, the great virtue in the Platonic-Christian-Cartesian worldview. Moreover, being freed from another's control, or gaining self-control, is a very liberal-humanist concern. Self-control is not merely a democratic virtue; it is also associated with the "flight from the feminine," which is part of the "masculine epistemic stance, best manifested in detached and self-controlled objectivity" (Code, "Epistemology" 175). My argument, in brief, is that if we can regain an appreciation for ritual and relational magic, rather than fixating on the mechanistic principles of power and control, we may succeed in articulating a more humane rhetoric. The notion of the living text is, of course, central to this argument.

Ultimately, the emphasis on a power struggle, or battle for control, between reader and author or reader and text participates in the tradition of agonistic rhetoric, which is central to mainstream Western thinking. In other words, the radical, liberatory potential

of hypertext appears to be founded on the ideology that it purports to deconstruct—i.e., the ideology of Enlightenment humanism, whose ideal citizen is a rational, self-interested, autonomous man. Far from subverting this ideology, the rhetoric of liberatory hypertext, by focusing on personal empowerment, actually reinforces liberal humanism. Thus, I do not wish to found my argument for feminist literary hypertext on a rhetoric of personal liberation or empowerment. Rather, I wish to focus on hypertext's potential for facilitating interpersonal connection. I am far more concerned with relationality than with personal empowerment.

Varieties of Empowerment

The rhetoric of empowerment, ultimately, comes down to a struggle for what Starhawk (a.k.a. Miriam Simos) has termed *power-over*. Starhawk discusses three systems of power: power-from-within, power-with, and power-over. I summarize these three systems of power below: "*Power-from-within* is akin to the sense of mastery we develop as young children with each new unfolding ability [. . .]. But power-from-within [. . .] also arises from our sense of connection, our bonding with other human beings, and with the environment" (Starhawk 10). *Power-with*, or influence, is "the power of a strong individual in a group of equals, the power not to command, but to suggest and be listened to, to begin something and see it happen" (10). The third system of power, power-over, comes from the consciousness Starhawk has termed "estrangement: the view of the world as made up of atomized, nonliving parts, mechanically interacting, valued not for what they inherently are but only in relation to some outside standard" (9). Like classical,

agonistic rhetoric, power-over "is ultimately born of war and the structures, social and intrapsychic, necessary to sustain mass, organized warfare" (9). The problem, in terms of my critique of the rhetoric of empowerment, is that in "the dominant culture, power-with has become confused with power-over" (10). Although Starhawk refers to her first type of power, power-from-within, as "empowerment," under the influence of masculinist rhetoric, empowerment is tacitly assumed to mean *power-over*. In other words, both *power-from-within* and *power-with* tend to be confused with *power-over*.

In the objectivist, masculinist worldview, there is but one type of power—power-over; therefore, the reader and the author, as well as the reader and the text, are assumed to be in power struggle. Furthermore, Starhawk's discussion of "the world as made up of atomized, nonliving parts, mechanically interacting" is in perfect accord with Code's critique of the epistemology of medium-sized objects. In short, based on the rhetoric of personal empowerment, the reader is assumed to crave power *over* a medium-sized text-object.

I must stress that empowerment, per se, is not an anti-feminist principle; rather, it is liberal humanism's myopic focus on *individual* empowerment that I find problematic. Power is a necessary element of feminism because feminism is inherently critical and political. Feminist practices are designed to intervene in history, to change the world, not just to analyze reality from a safe, objective distance. I maintain, though, that the most genuinely feminist expression of power is *power-with*, the kind of power that comes into being in the space between people. More specifically, as feminists strive to destabilize

agonistic rhetoric, power-over "is ultimately born of war and the structures, social and intrapsychic, necessary to sustain mass, organized warfare" (9). The problem, in terms of my critique of the rhetoric of empowerment, is that in "the dominant culture, power-with has become confused with power-over" (10). Although Starhawk refers to her first type of power, power-from-within, as "empowerment," under the influence of masculinist rhetoric, empowerment is tacitly assumed to mean *power-over*. In other words, both *power-from-within* and *power-with* tend to be confused with *power-over*.

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oppressive hierarchies and cultural hegemonies, I believe that power-with is the most effective kind of power.

Under a feminist paradigm, the struggle for personal power might give way to dialogue. Ideally, feminism changes the world not through increased control but through better dialogue. Rather than *applying power from a distance*, as in the crudest form of magic, feminists change the world by engaging in social networks and influencing the connections within these networks. Evelyn Fox Keller claims that feminist action is "more of an acting *in* than an acting *on* the world" (*Reflections* 100); therefore, power-with is premised on *acting in* rather than on. Traditional rhetors, following the model of administrative rhetoric, seek *power-over*, and they act *on* an audience rather than *in* a community. *Acting in* implies an ethics of responsibility, respect, and care because the rhetor must live with the consequences her or his words, while *acting on* implies objective distance, disengagement, and possible irresponsibility.

Coming to terms with the rhetoric of empowerment boils down to a choice between granting ontological priority to *entities* or *relations*. Enlightenment humanism begins with entities rather than relations. And human beings, in their capacity as pre-existing entities, seek power-over before power-with. However, as Hayles argues, "Beginning with relation rather than pre-existing entities changes everything" ("FM" 3). This *relational ontology* differs radically from the ontology of liberal humanism, which is premised on individuality, autonomy, objective distance, and so on. Hayles states further, "We do not exist in order to relate; rather, we relate in order that we may exist as fully realized human beings" (31). If relations are ontologically *prior to* entities, then power-

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over loses its rhetorical appeal. In short, my thesis is that hypertext theory, as well as Western culture in general, ought to shift from the rhetoric of personal empowerment to a rhetoric of relationality. With such a theoretical grounding, hypertext might actually be liberatory, but in a far different way than the liberal ideology promises.

Rearticulating Feminist Rhetoric

I discussed in the previous chapter Hayles' argument that information technology is producing a shift from the ancient polarity of presence/absence to pattern/randomness. Not only are relationships patterns, but relationships between individuals, along with social movements founded on such relationships, may be more theoretically and experientially compelling than the traditional focus on individuals. And insofar as social movements are patterns, the shift from presence/absence to pattern/randomness provides a theoretical basis for rearticulating feminist rhetoric. For instance, the next history of feminist rhetoric might focus on social movements rather than exceptional individuals; that is to say, beginning with relations rather than individuals or entities allows us to go beyond the individualist, "great woman" histories of feminist rhetoric. In a much-discussed 1992 article, Barbara Biesecker argued,

> [T]he rhetorical canon is a system of representation whose present form is predicated on and celebrates the individual. [. . .] [But] entailed in the valorization of the individual is a mechanics of exclusion that fences out a vast array of collective rhetorical practices to where there belongs no proper name. The exaltation of individual rhetorical actions is secured by way of the devaluing of

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> collective rhetorical practices which [. . .] have been the most common form of women's intervention in the public sphere. (143-144)

I agree with Biesecker's further claim that "a decidedly revisionary history of Rhetoric hinges at least in part on our articulating an alternative to the ideology of individualism" (145).

The point I wish to emphasize is that feminist rhetoric is not *present* in individual women; rather, it *comes into being* in relationships—i.e., interpersonal relationships as well as large-scale social movements. Relationships are patterns. Furthermore, relationships between women need not be privileged over other relational dynamics. Feminist rhetoric may emanate from relationships between women and women, between women and men, and even between men. Feminism then becomes about gender rather than women. As Hopkins argues, "[F]eminism should be about gender and the structures of sexism and oppression that arise from hierarchical evaluations of gender, not about the problematic ahistorical category of woman per se" (51). Gender, of course, is relational. Gendered beings do not exit prior to relationships; we are born into relationships and thrust into ongoing conversations. Accordingly, *conversation* is where rhetoric comes into being; it is not generated *ex nihilo* by autonomous individuals. Iser argues that the text-as-read comes into being in a "virtual dimension" between the reader and the written text (958). Arguing from analogy, then, we might state that historiographers of feminist rhetoric would do well to focus on the virtual dimension between individuals, for it is in this dimension that both gender and rhetoric *happen*.

In the next chapter as I present and defend the methodology of this study. I also delve more deeply into a number of themes raised in this as well as the previous chapter. Ultimately, after I have (partially) traced the multiple intersections among feminist rhetoric, hypertext theory, and feminist epistemology, a new articulation of feminist rhetoric will emerge more fully.

CHAPTER 3

Methodology: Breaking Readerly Silence

As I argued in the previous chapter, citing Evelyn Fox Keller, feminist action is "more of an acting *in* than an acting *on* the world" (*Reflections* 100). I believe this approach applies equally well to the wreater's engagement with hypertext, and by changing the word *act* to *write*, I have a theoretical foundation for arguing that the engaged hypertext wreater writes in the text rather on it. The textual intervention enacted through a read-write hypertext interface, such as Storyspace, is significant on several levels. Most importantly, this approach directly addresses the modernist bias for studying literary texts in an objectivist, purely analytical manner. With conventional literary texts as well as literary hypertext, a feminist stance calls for active engagement with the text, rather than standing outside the text as a "disinterested" critic or theorist.

In this chapter I present and defend the methodology undergirding the core of this study, i.e., the narrative-analytic account of my readerly relationship with *Quibbling*, *Patchwork Girl*, *Cyborg: Engineering the Body Electric*, "Lust," and "I Have Said Nothing." As mentioned previously, I have used the read-write capability of Storyspace to write within these five hypertexts. One may read these texts without Storyspace in a read-only mode and, even when using Storyspace, one is certainly not obligated to write in the text; yet, from a methodological standpoint, my rationale for using the full functionality of the Storyspace interface is that it allows me to intervene in the text,

effectively writing myself into the text, as opposed to remaining on the outside looking in. I must emphasize that this dissertation is a rhetorical study, not a literary study. I have not undertaken a close reading of the five hypertexts listed above, for such a task would entail book-length study in itself. As a student of rhetoric, I am primarily interested in the shifting dynamics of writer, reader, and text in a hypertextual environment.

As stated previously, feminist rhetors are engaged in "breaking the silence" (Lunsford "On Reclaiming" 6). I have also referred to Gloria's Anzaldua's "personal triumph over the 'tradition of silence'" (Lunsford, "Toward" 1). Hence, with respect to feminist rhetoric, the methodology of this study is premised on the need to counteract the silencing of the reader, which is encouraged by the conventions of print publication, classical rhetoric, and teacher-centered pedagogy. The tradition of classical rhetoric has relied heavily on the binary of the vocal rhetor and the silent audience. Consequently, reading and writing are typically treated as vastly dissimilar activities. We often hear of the importance of reading, and children are admonished to become good readers if they would succeed in contemporary society; however, writing is treated differently, as if it were an inborn talent, a mysterious gift, or somehow magical. But in adopting the term "wreater," I have been motivated by the desire to blur the boundary between reading and writing. My thesis is that by writing ourselves into our texts, feminist readers may break the readerly silence (i.e., the silence of the library and the traditional classroom) enforced by the conventional text and traditional Western rhetoric.

The task of writing myself into the five hypertexts was accomplished as follows: As I read, I added my own text within the given hypertext. My additions, consisting of

commentary, analysis, and personal reflection, are linked to and from the "primary" text. For the reader's convenience, in each of the hypertexts, the new lexias are nested within a lexia labeled "Commentary." In addition to creating new lexias, I have occasionally added text, typically short notes, within existing lexias, italicizing the new text to set it apart. Finally, I have stored all five hypertexts on a single rewritable compact disc, or CD-RW. The material on the CD may be treated as *data,* and it may be read at any point among the five chapters of this study. Chapter 4 contains a more formal, or linear, narrative-analytic account of my encounter, or readerly relationships with, the five hypertexts.

At this juncture a question arises regarding the appropriateness of the terms *primary text* and *secondary text* within a hypertext. By conventional standards, the text I have written into the five hypertexts would be considered supplemental text or marginalia. Yet, insofar as hypertext blurs the primary/secondary distinction, the text contributed by the wreater and the text composed by the copyright-protected author are of equal status. Because the center/margin binary opposition breaks down, the added text cannot be classified as notes, glosses, or marginalia. In fact, notes, glosses, and marginalia do not exist as such in hypertext. Such categories belong to the hierarchical environment of conventional text.

I asserted in the previous chapter that readers of a conventional text can write *on the pages*, but they cannot write *in the text*, whereas hypertext wreaters write *in* the text, not merely *on* the pages. I flesh out this claim as the chapter unfolds; however, a legitimate question to ask at this point is why is writing in the text better than writing on the pages?

In brief, writing in the text, or writing oneself into the text, suggests intimate reader engagement rather than objective distance. I have argued for a feminism founded on *situated objectivity*, by which I mean that the subject is implicated in objective reality, in contrast to the liberal humanist valorization of individuality, autonomy, and objective distance. Such a philosophical stance is founded on a firm subject/object split. Hence, writing oneself into a text blurs the classical rhetorical divisions between text, writer, and reader (i.e., the rhetorical triangle). In other words, a feminist theorization of hypertext blurs, or smudges, the borders on the map of classical rhetoric—i.e., the map that has excluded all non-mainstream, non-patriarchal rhetorics.

Explanation and Understanding

The encounter with hypertext is fundamentally different from the encounter with conventional text because hypertext calls into question mainstream subject/object dichotomies. Hypertext calls for engaged interpretation rather than distanced analysis. Consequently, the theorist would be well served by employing a self-reflective, hermeneutic approach, perhaps a kind of phenomenological hermeneutics in the Heideggerian tradition. A self-reflective, phenomenological hermeneutics implies a personally engaged researcher—that is, a researcher who does not assume the position of a subject dispassionately studying, or dissecting, an object or exploring a textual terrain. Rather, the researcher takes on the role of participant-observer, observing her/himself as much as the text. In sum, the wreater-critic-theorist of hypertext, if she or he is to be effective, must actively engage the text, rather than analyzing it from a safe distance.

The phenomenological hermeneutics tradition poses a problem, however, at least for the present study, inasmuch as it is not feminist, despite substantial intersections with feminist theory (Code, *WCSN* 145-49; Kruks 68). The positions taken by these continental philosophers (e.g., Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, Gadamer, Ricoeur) all rest on the mainstream assumption of the autonomous, unitary, rational man. The enlightened self, rather than social groups or communities, is the central concern of this philosophical school. But within a feminist epistemology, knowing "becomes a way of engaging with the world, where 'world' is conceived as much circumstantially and socially as physically, materially" (Code, *RS* 184). The world, like the text, is a living organism that calls for active engagement by socially constructed participants. Thus, any application of a phenomenological hermeneutic approach, for the purposes of this study, must be reconceived within a feminist context, according to which each individual lives within a number of overlapping, shifting epistemic communities. Ultimately, connection rather than autonomy must be the central concern of a feminist hermeneutics.

In critiquing mainstream, masculinist epistemology, we can draw distinctions between different types of knowledge. Paul Ricoeur drew such a distinction based on disciplinary boundaries, arguing that the natural sciences and the social sciences differ in terms of their goals as well as their methodologies. The goals, according to Ricoeur, of the natural sciences and the social sciences are, respectively, *explanation* and *understanding* (49). Natural laws are explained, not understood, by scientists. Explanation is a distanced, analytical type of knowledge, while understanding is more engaged and self-reflective. Hence, as long as the natural sciences hold to the objectivist

paradigm, the best they can hope for is explanation. And despite the fact that scientists are obviously human, they can learn virtually nothing about the lived realities of socially situated human beings from objectivist methodologies. However, rather than reifying the explanation/understanding binary, we might speak of "partial explanation" (Haraway, "SM" 160). Partial explanation would be a hybrid of Ricouer's explanation and understanding. The cyborg, as stated previously, is "resolutely committed to partiality" (Haraway 151). Both understanding and explanation are partial.

To reiterate a point made earlier in this study, mainstream, objectivist epistemology takes knowledge of medium-sized objects (e.g., billiard balls, rocks, human bodies, nuclear missiles, etc.) as exemplary. Now, based on Ricouer's explanation/understanding distinction, it follows that medium-sized objects are typically explained rather than understood. Understanding is self-reflective; it takes subjectivity into account and, therefore, encompasses self-understanding as well as understanding of others. Explanation, by contrast, is founded on analytic methodologies. By extrapolation, then, we may conclude that *acting on* promotes, at best, explanation, while *acting in* facilitates understanding. Thus, in terms of methodology, I wish to make a case for a shift from objectivist analysis to engaged (partial) understanding.

Art critic John Berger discussed explanation and understanding within the context of an essay on Cubism, a subject to which I return later in this chapter. Berger wrote,

> We begin with the surface, but since everything in the picture [Picasso's *Bottle and Glasses*] refers back to the surface we begin with the conclusion. We then search—not for explanation, as we do when presented with an image with a

> single, predominate meaning [. . .] but for some understanding of the configuration of events whose interaction is the conclusion from which we began. (*The Moment of Cubism* 24)

Cubism and literary hypertext have a number of qualities in common, as I will argue below, but for now the commonality I wish to foreground is that both media call for understanding rather than mere explanation.

Explanation and Representation

Explanations are commonly represented; that is to say, in mainstream Western thought, knowledge is represented as explanation. Representation, then, is integral to objectivist epistemology. In literal terms, in order for knowledge or scientific discoveries to spread, knowledge that is *present* to one person—or more likely present to a collection of people or a discipline—must be made present, or *re-presented*, to others. Furthermore, knowers are assumed to be autonomous, self-sufficient individuals; therefore, knowledge must be transferred across the gap from one mind to another by means of representation—hence, the relevance of the "conduit metaphor" of communication, as discussed previously. From this perspective, knowledge is deliverable content, as if it were packaged for shipment.

But this conception of the knower as a self-sufficient agent has been questioned by feminist epistemologists. For instance, Code makes the case for taking a "second-person" stance, which entails rejecting the principle of epistemic autonomy. Far from being an autonomous, self-sufficient whole, each person is partial. Rather than conceiving of

individuals as identical, interchangeable units in a totalizing, mechanistic system, "second persons" are each different yet socially connected. No person is complete in and of herself or himself; therefore, others are vitally necessary. It also follows that the *otherness of the other* ought to be respected (*WCSN*, 80-87). Because we are all different, as opposed to identical, interchangeable cogs in a machine, we cannot hope to fully know another person. Perhaps most importantly, we are never fully present even to ourselves; that is, we cannot know ourselves completely or represent ourselves truthfully to others. All we can share are partial truths or opinions, what the Greeks called *doxa*.

By extension, rejecting the principle of epistemic autonomy may provide an impetus for going beyond "great woman" histories of rhetoric, as discussed previously. Each person, inasmuch as she or he is a second person, is socially situated—that is, situated in an ongoing conversation. Consequently, conversations and social movements ought to take precedence over individual genius. After all, even geniuses are beholden to contemporary conversations and opinions. Understanding is a "situated knowledge" in Haraway's sense (188). Or, as Ricoeur claims, "The first function of understanding is to orient us in a situation" (56). Such understanding, furthermore, is a thoroughly rhetorical understanding; it is the basis of *phronesis*, or practical wisdom, which I believe is central to feminism. Because feminism is political, it must be practical; it deals with probable knowledge and aims for partial victories.

Extrapolating now to hypertext theory, the second-person stance encourages the hypertext wreater to think of her interaction with the text as a reciprocal relationship with another living being—an other that cannot be dominated by an aggressive reader or

investigator. The second-person stance has the potential, then, to go beyond mere explanation to yield understanding. Understanding allows the wreater to orient herself within the text, or within the hypertextual situation. In other words, rather than assuming an objective, analytical stance, the hypertext wreater inhabits the text like Heidegger's *Dasein* (*there-being* or *being-there*). *Dasein* is not the self-contained ego or subject but fully contextualized existence. As Iain Thomson explains, for Heidegger, "existence is fundamentally a 'being-there, that is, a temporally-structured making intelligible of the place in which we find ourselves."[1] Thus, hypertext wreaters find themselves, and also write themselves, within texts. Or as Ricoeur, in commenting on Heidegger, writes, "What must be affirmed [. . .] is the condition of inhabiting the world, a condition which renders situation, understanding and interpretation possible" (56).

But again, we mustn't think in terms of autonomous individuals inhabiting the world, but rather partial, connected, socially situated actors—or performers. Ultimately, we are all performers. We are actors in a number of overlapping narratives, and we are also the narrators.

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[1] The Thomson quote comes from an unpaginated website. Thomson, Iain. "Martin Heidegger: a philosophical snapshot. Available online: http://orpheus.ucsd.edu/eands/ heid.html. What follows is an extended quote from this site:

"Being is grounded in the temporal structure of those beings ('Da-sein') who have an understanding of Being. With this famous reconceptualization of the self not as a subject, consciousness, or ego but as a "Dasein," Heidegger takes the German word for 'existence' (*Dasein*) and interprets it in terms of its basic semantic elements ("there" [*Da*] + 'Being" [*Sein*]) in order to illustrate his claim that existence is fundamentally a "being-there," that is, a temporally-structured making intelligible of the place in which we find ourselves. ('Dasein *is* its disclosedness,' Heidegger says.) He understands this 'making-intelligible' as 'truth' in its most 'primordial' sense. As shown by the Greek word for truth, *A-letheia* (the alpha-privative + *Lethe,* the river of forgetting), truth is primordially a kind of 'un-concealment,' a 'dis-closing' or manifestation of presence which in fact any correspondence theory of truth must implicitly presuppose (in order even for there simply to *be* something to which to correspond)."

Time, Space, and Narrative

The wreater who inhabits the text is *narrated*; that is to say, wreaters *narrate themselves into* texts, which is how the text and the wreater come to be understood, as opposed to merely explained. Understanding, like narrative, depends on the temporal dimension. Understanding, furthermore, is experiential; therefore, temporal structure is closely tied to experiential reality (Fish 982). Texts are realized experientially—that is, in time. Furthermore, conversation occurs in time, and readers may be said to *converse* with texts. Assuming, then, that the primary task of the theorist or critic of hypertext is not to explain the text from the outside, but to inhabit it, she may choose to write, perhaps in a first-person narrative, about the experience of being in the text, or the understanding gained of the text and of herself. In other words, the wreater can write about the conversation she had (or is having) with the text.

The notion of a conversation between reader and text relates to my claim, made in chapter 1, that hypertext is a kind of "cyborg literacy." Cyborgs are "cybernetic (feedback-controlled) systems" (Haraway 164). Thus, when a person is engaged with another entity—whether it be human or nonhuman—there is a cybernetic feedback loop, and this loop engenders self-reflective understanding, as opposed to explanation/analysis. A conversation, then, is essentially a feedback loop, as the participants modify, extend, or challenge one another's words (or texts). Objectivist epistemology does not recognize a feedback loop between knower and known, subject and object, self and other. Under this model, the ideal subject neither influences nor is influenced by the object; objective

reality is known from a safe distance and represented to others. But based on the insights of feminist epistemology, we can argue that the knower and the known, as well as the reader and the text, constitute a cybernetic system.

As discussed in the previous chapters, cyborg writing is not premised on writing an "origin story," or re-presenting something absent. Cyborg writing does not support the cult of originality, which is premised on denying the influence of time, along with the influence of other entities. The cybernetic feedback loop does not permit static representations; therefore, time, along with narrative and conversation, is an essential ingredient in cyborg writing. In other words, the cyborg must be *narrated*, or written in time and space—or more accurately, in space-time.

The cyborg is not a Cartesian; cyborg experience is not premised on objective distance or the privileging of the spatial over the temporal dimension. The cyborg, again, is forever partial. By contrast, organic wholeness, inasmuch as it eliminates temporality, is the dream of an uncontested, *nonpartial* reality. Given the influence of time, or the dynamic nature of space-time, the cyborg's vision is always partial; that is to say, the cyborg is not concerned with complete or finished representations of reality. Haraway writes, "A cyborg body is not innocent; it was not born in a garden; it does not seek unitary identity and so generate antagonistic dualisms without end" (180). To be born in a garden suggests the notion of being born alone in an idyllic space, without social construction, mediation, or interpretation—or without being engaged in conversations. In other words, in cyborg writing we move *from representation to conversation*.

Understanding calls for narrative. "Second-person," socially situated understanding,

or situated objectivity, is gained through engagement with others, or "conversation" in a broad sense. Conversation, in fact, may serve as a metonymy for all interpersonal engagement.[2] Conversations, like narratives, are temporal; they require time. It follows, then, that engaged understanding may be distinguished from the voyeuristic, *non-narrated* gaze. The gaze, in contrast to conversation, does not need a narrative—or dramatistic action in the Burkean sense; it can be purely spatial and static, as in gazing at photographs, or nearly static in the case of a plotless pornographic film. The pleasure of the gaze, or "fetishistic scopophilia [. . .] can exist outside linear time as the erotic instinct is focused on the look alone" (Mulvey 1450). The look, as discussed previously, was the privileged epistemic mode for Plato and also Descartes, and mainstream Western philosophy has consistently denigrated, and also feminized, narrative.

Mythos and Logos

Narrative and analysis constitute an important polarity in the history of Western thought and education. On one level, narrative and analysis may be equated with the noetic worlds of *mythos* (i.e., the consciousness formed by the oral narration of myth, legend, and poetry[3]) and *logos* (i.e., the consciousness formed by the written word or dialectical logic). While the terms *mythos* and *logos* carry a variety of meanings in different contexts, I am concerned here with *mythos* and *logos* as "noetic worlds," or

[2] I use the word *metonymy*, rather than the more general term *metaphor*, because conversation is an aspect or attribute of interpersonal engagement. In metonymy, a part stands for a whole.

[3] The Greek word *lexia* is the plural form of *lexis*—"word" or "speech." The root of *lexis* is *legein*—"to say" as well as "legend." *Logos* also means "word," although it has a number of other meanings. In this discussion, I am using *logos* in the sense of the logic of the Socratic dialectic.

spheres of mind (Ong 119). Jarratt argues, contrary to binaristic theories of classical scholars such as Eric Havelock and Walter Ong, that these two these two noetic worlds overlapped in Greece, and most likely elsewhere, at least since eighth century BCE. While it is true that *mythos* was the predominate mode of enculturation in pre-literate Greece, *logos* and rational argument were not invented along with the alphabetic script in fifth-century Greece (Jarratt 32).[4] While the fifth-century Sophists were skilled dialecticians, they, like the Homeric rhapsodes that preceded them, knew the power of oral narrative. But Plato's radical proposal was to place *logos* above *mythos*. Jarratt argues, "For Plato, the kind of consciousness required for distanced, critical analysis would take the form of the dialectical method, built on the structure of hypotactic logic" (34). Plato, through the voice of Socrates, associated *mythos* with sophistic oratorical rhetoric, which he characterized as shrewd deception and flattery (*Gorgias* 71; *Phaedrus* 142).[5] But even Plato, who was, of course, full of contradictions, used narrative to great effect; yet he used narrative to promote *logos*. The same cannot be said of Aristotle, who, in works such as *Poetics*, *Nicomachean Ethics*, and *Metaphysics*, created a wide gap between poetic and prosaic discourses (Jarratt xvi, 34). And, at least since the thirteenth century, mainstream Western philosophers have followed Aristotle in keeping *logos* and *mythos* separate, which has served to marginalize narrative and poetry

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[4] In critiquing the Western, Enlightenment idea of history Linda Tuhiwai Smith writes, "Literacy [. . .] was used as a criterion for assessing the development of a society and its progress to a stage where history can be said to begin. [. . .] History was the story of people who were regarded as *fully human*" (32). In other words, Western scholars implicitly regarded primary oral cultures as "pre-fully-human."

[5] Bizzel and Herzberg edition. *The Rhetorical Tradition*.

But now, in order to advance a feminist rearticulation of rhetoric, the *logos/mythos* border needs to be crossed from both sides. *Mythos* need not replace *logos* or push *logos* to the margins. *Mythos* must simply be placed on an equal footing with *logos*. In making such a move, feminist rhetoricians would be following the example of the Sophists (Jarratt 39).

Furthermore, straddling or smudging the *mythos/logos* border would serve to break the dominance of spatial epistemologies. In *Orality and Literacy*, Ong argues that writing, and especially print, has promoted the spatialization of thought—i.e., thought is spatialized on the surface of the printed page (117-132). The "shift from oral to written speech is essentially a shift from sound to visual space" (Ong 117). Writing transformed *logos*, the word, from its original aural mode to a visual or graphic form. As such, *logos* became highly geometric (consider the Pythagorean theorem); therefore, *logos* is at home on the surface of a page or scroll. While *logos*, insofar as it has been taken over by writing and print, seeks firm borders (e.g., the edges of a printed page or scroll, the covers of a book), *mythos*, the aurally based noetic world, is inextricably linked to cycles and continuity. Consequently, *mythos*, to the extent that it transgresses, or "bleeds over," textual borders, may be associated with intertextuality. Moreover, given the emphasis on cycles, the concept of *mythos* intersects productively with traditional constructions of "the feminine." Along with the common association with the menstrual cycle, which may be essentialist, an argument can be made that the modern, middle-class notion of "women's work," which generally translates as domestic work, is cyclical; that is to say,

the daily domestic chores begin all over again every day. By contrast, modern, nonagricultural "men's work" is often organized around projects that have definite completion dates. Consequently, based on a combination of biological and purely cultural factors, women, on average, may have a greater appreciation than men for *mythos*. Finally, to complete this chain of associations, we can observe that traditional "women's work" is highly recursive or repetitious, very much like the process of (re)reading the lexias of a hypertext. As I claimed in the previous chapter, literary hypertexts usually *cycle rather than conclude*. Hypertext, in its most creative articulations, is intertextual and cyclical.

It is important to note, however, that in making these associations one risks reinscribing oppressive, gendered binaries, such as the division between public and private spheres. We must not naively celebrate the cyclical, "mythic" nature of traditional women's work. For third-wave feminisms, it is vital to bring men into traditionally "feminine," domestic spheres, and ultimately to de-gender the public and private spheres—i.e., the Greek *polis* and *oikos*, which are associated with *logos* and *mythos*, respectively.

The binaries of *mythos/logos* and understanding/explanation are related—and both binaries may be productively blurred. That is, inasmuch as understanding is situated in space-time, there is no need to (try to) control space. By contrast, explanation tends to be static and spatially controlling. In the empiricist mode, space becomes a static background for moving objects. The laboratory model, for example, is premised on the need to keep (feminine) nature under control in a secure space where it can be analyzed.

Space, as a static background, enables objective observation and analysis to take place. For instance, if time is used to measure an object's movement through space (or velocity), then space must be treated as a static background—space cannot be moving along with the objects under observation. In other words, the relation between the spatial and the temporal dimensions is important because if space can be treated as static, objects can be measured in time. One can then produce propositional (X-knows-that-p) knowledge (e.g., "I know that planets move in elliptical orbits."). Code claims, "For positivist epistemologists, sensory observation in ideal observation conditions is the privileged source of knowledge, offering the best promise of certainty" (*RS* 25). One way to bring conditions closer to the ideal is by controlling space, which leads to an objective "view" of reality; therefore, the visual-spatial epistemology attempts to reduce the temporal dimension so that "truth" can be situated in space. An interesting connection with print technology is revealed in Ong's assertion that "print situates words in space more relentlessly that writing [that is, handwriting] ever did. Writing moves words from the sound world to a world of visual space, but print locks words into position in this space. Control of position is everything in print" (121).

The problem with the objectivist paradigm is that the still spatial background does not exist. *Space-time moves*. We might envision a person trying to draw a straight line between two points on a chalkboard that slides under the pressure of the chalk. Such a line would be, at best, curved, rather than the paradigmatic shortest distance between two points. One is reminded here of Joyce's concept of the "hypertext contour" as "the figure of changing change" (*Othermindedness* 43). The knower is situated in space-time, or in

the text, rather than standing outside the system, and space-time cannot be controlled from "the inside." Knower and known, or subject and object, are both situated within the same space-time. To illustrate this point, I cite below a statement from "Buzz-Daze and the Quotidian Stream" where Carolyn Guyer speaks of a dialogic exchanged between two characters in *Quibbling*:

> I think of this interchange as a fairly commonplace occurrence, a situation where people are in a sense collaborative artists, people creating themselves, Hilda and Robert, in narrative juxtaposition to one another. That's inside the story. In the literary lump of the fiction, the thing that doesn't exist without a reader, the reader/writer creates Hilda, Robert, and herself, in space-time. It is exactly the same process used by any writer of a literary lump." (unpaginated online text)

In summary, the connection that I wish to make between the *mythos/logos* dialectic and hypertext theory is that the hypertext wreater and the text, insofar as they constitute a cybernetic system, share the same space-time. This fact leads to a radical revisioning of the writer-reader-text rhetorical triangle, as I have argued throughout this study.

The Place of First-Person Narrative

I decided to write myself into five literary hypertexts because a feminist theorization of hypertext must be personal. Keller reminds us of the 1970s feminist credo "the personal is political." She then extends this notion to make the revolutionary claim that "the scientific is personal" (9). And as cited previously, Lunsford refers to feminist rhetors' commitment to "naming in personal terms" ("On Reclaiming" 6). Likewise,

Glenn speaks of "current institutional, intellectual, political, and personal values" that inform rhetorical history (6). Accordingly, it is my contention that an adequate theorization of hypertext must be personal; it must break down the masculinist dichotomies of subject/object, reason/feeling, fact/value, masculine/feminine, rhetor/audience, and so on. Moreover, such an engaged approach entails the use of first-person narrative, rather than objectivist analysis, in writing up the "findings," or tentative conclusions, of the study. Code, in advocating narrative as an antidote to objectivist analysis, writes that "once epistemologists recognize the locatedness of all cognitive activity in the projects and constructions of specifically positioned subjects, then the relevance of narrative will be apparent as an epistemological resource" (*WCSN* 170). In other words, all cognitive activity is located in space-time, and narrative—or the conversation between writer, reader, and text—expresses this locatedness far more effectively than analysis ever could.

Analysis, nevertheless, remains essential to scholarship; it may, in fact, be incorporated into a hybrid narrative-analytic, or narranalytic, mode that refrains from objectivist distantiation, or "distanciation" (Ricoeur 113).[6] In other words, narrative may be analytical and analysis may be narrated. Moreover, first-person narrative, like all writing, has ethical implications. Specifically, writing in the first-person allows me to claim and take full responsibility for my analysis. Narrative also helps the writer to account for the process of analysis, as opposed to pretending that an argument springs

[6] For Ricoeur, "distanciation [. . .] establishes the autonomy of the text with respect to it author, its situation and its original addressee" (113).

into life fully formed like Athena from Zeus's head. My sense of a narranalytic mode of writing is similar to what Code calls "storied analyses" (*RS* 177). Joyce also classified his two essay collections as a "theoretical narrative, both a narrative of theory and a text theoretically at least a narrative" (*OTM* 3). To cite one more example, bell hooks stated, "[F]undamentally I believe that combining the analytical and experiential is a richer way of knowing" (89).

A first-person narrative-analysis—which must be distinguished from the *analysis of narrative* (i.e., narratology or literary criticism)—allows the private and public realms to overlap. The private realm typically features first-person language, which is suitable for documenting the lived experience of the writer, whereas the public realm, which tends to feature analysis, calls for a more impersonal rhetoric. But, as Foss, Foss, and Griffin write in their discussion of Starhawk's rhetoric, the "idea that there is only one possibility for the realm of rhetoric—the public realm that embodies patriarchy, with its characteristics of division, hierarchy, and power-over—is too limiting" (187). That is to say, feminist rhetoric does not privilege public discourse and analysis over private talk, "gossip," or narrative.

Narrative is central to both feminist rhetoric and feminist epistemology. For instance, Gloria Anzaldua remarked, "[F]or me, writing has always been about narrative, about story [. . .]. Theory is a kind of narrative. Science—you know, physics—that narrative, that's a hit on reality" (Lunsford, "Toward a Mestiza Rhetoric" 4).[7] As Anzaldua's

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[7] Lunsford, rather than Anzaldua, is cited here because the Anzaldua quote comes from an interview

statement indicates, scientists have no choice but to narrate their experimental procedures and results, although they usually do so in the most objective manner possible, typically relying heavily on the passive voice and referring to themselves in the third-person. Scientific prose, then, is designed to conceal or even erase the subject, or agent, as the writer does his best to remove all traces of his presence from the final scientific product.[8]

Of course, my main concern in this study is not merely narrative or even literary narrative in general, but hypertextual literary narrative. From this standpoint, it is interesting that as Code advocates narrative in scholarly writing her choice of words overlaps with the vocabulary of hypertext theory. She asserts, "Storytelling [. . .] presents loci for identification and differentiation, agreement and dispute, and presents them over a textured range of possibilities which are linked, yet contingent and available for assent or refusal" (*RS* 167-168). The "loci for identification and differentiation" may easily be envisioned as lexias, or writing spaces, in a hypertext, and the notion of "linked, yet contingent" possibilities is obviously quite hypertextual. One may also clearly discern associations with hypertext theory in a statement Code makes on disciplinary narratives in epistemology: "There is no linear story to tell of feminist interrogations of 'the epistemological project,' no single, unbroken narrative line with a beginning, middle, and end" (*RS* 169). Again, feminist narratives, and especially feminist hypertext narratives, tend to cycle rather than conclude.

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conducted and published by Lunsford.

[8] I use the masculine pronoun advisedly in this sentence to highlight the masculinist orientation of modern science.

The methodology I am advocating here may be objected to on the grounds that first-person narrative is relativistic and not rigorous enough for legitimate scholarship. Insofar as relativism is denigrated on the grounds of subjectivity, it is deemed incapable of producing real knowledge. On this view, objectivity must be vigilantly enforced if practical or scientifically valid knowledge is to be produced, and it is imperative that the idiosyncrasies of the investigator be neutralized, to the greatest degree possible anyway, by rigorous experimental design. Investigators be interchangeable, in other words. For, according to binaristic thinking, if one tampers with objectivity, even a little bit, one necessarily falls into the abyss of relativism.

As I discussed in the previous chapter, the falling metaphor is gendered; therefore, the phrase "falling into relativism" has definite implications for a feminist theorization of hypertext. Yet relativism is not necessarily a bad thing, as long as objectivity is not entirely rejected, which would constitute *objectivism* rather than objectivity. For feminist epistemologists "taking subjectivity into account does not entail abandoning objectivity" (Code, *RS* 49). Objectivism is premised on the erasure of all traces of subjectivity (Code, *WCSN* 51-52). Yet, taking subjectivity into account is actually a far more realistic, empirical approach than the traditional practice of ignoring the investigator or knower, given that such objectivity is a fiction at best. After all, if the subject did not matter, scholarly credentials and institutional affiliation, or ethos, would not matter.

The stark *either/or* perspective, which attempts to erase the subject, is not only fallacious, it actually hinders the advancement of theory by preserving the hegemony of mainstream epistemologies and methodologies. The fallacy lies is in presenting

objectivism as politically or ideologically neutral. As Code argues, "The relentless denigration of relativism [. . .] suppresses any suspicion that 'universalism' and 'anti-relativism' might themselves be political rather than purely epistemological requirements" (*RS* 188). Objectivism, in other words, is no more politically neutral than relativism.

Relativism and Difference

Implicit in relativism is a respect for difference, or an acknowledgement of the *otherness of others*. The drive for unity, by contrast, can be quite oppressive insofar as it is premised on sameness. Haraway, for example, complains of "unity-through-domination or unity-through-incorporation [. . . and] the unintended erasure of polyvocal, unassimilable, radical difference" (157, 159). Differences tend to be erased when they do not fit into existing models or commonplaces. For instance, McClintock was misunderstood by eminent geneticists of her time because of "'tacit assumptions'—an implicit adherence to models that prevents people from looking at data with a fresh mind" (Keller, *A Feeling* 178). McClintock's methodology, as well as her worldview, was premised on respect for *difference without division or dichotomization*. Keller wrote that, for McClintock,

> Difference constitutes a principle for ordering the world radically unlike the principle of division and dichotomization (subject-object, mind-matter, feeling-reason, disorder-law). Whereas these oppositions are directed toward a cosmic unity typically excluding or devouring one of the pair, toward a unifying, all-

encompassing law, respect for difference remains content with multiplicity as an end in itself. (163)

A unity that devours "one of the pair" is inimical to feminism, inasmuch as feminism valorizes relationship, connection, and difference. Hence, the otherness of the other must be acknowledged and respected.

One important connection between McClintock's perspective and hypertext theory is that hypertext makes room for difference, while the conventional single-authored text tends to squeeze out difference and inconsistency. The principle of multiplicity ought to be central to hypertext theory, particularly a feminist hypertext theory. The hypertext wreater, to borrow Keller's words, "remains content with multiplicity as an end in itself." As discussed in chapter one, conventional text is a kind of "zero-sum game" (Douglas, *EOB* 20); that is to say, when a different, divergent statement is articulated, it replaces the previous statement. The "old" word, sentence, claim, or narrative line is erased as the "new-and-improved" one is written; therefore, the writer cannot argue two contradictory positions at once. According to the logic of the zero-sum game, each addition is balanced by a subtraction, or erasure, with the result being the maintenance of the status quo—i.e., the classically coherent text. In other words, the conventional print text is singular rather than multiple, and as such it encourages the view that only one truth is possible at a given time and/or place. Hence, Douglas argues that print "makes us all, more or less, into objectivists or positivists, regardless of our intentions" (*EOB* 20). In hypertext, by contrast, a writer may write as many conflicting lines of argument or diverging narratives as she wishes; she simply inserts a hyperlink and writes a new tangent. In the

multiperspectival text, then, contradiction need not be erased.

Multiperspectival epistemologies, as well as multilinear texts, reject objectivist division and distantiation. While individual persons, as material beings, are separate from one another and should be respected as such, they need not be socially or epistemologically divided from one another. As Keller writes, "Division severs connection and imposes distance; the recognition of difference provides a starting point for relatedness" (*Reflections* 163). Such a position is congruent with an ethics of care and respect because, even as it features the collective or community, it enables a kind of understanding that does not erase the individual. In other words, difference "invites a form of engagement and understanding that allows for preservation of the individual" (Keller, *Reflections* 164). Feminisms, then, must avoid totalizing positions, or philosophical or theoretical positions that erase difference (Haraway 159).

Here is perhaps where the intersection of feminist epistemology and hypertext is most salient. As discussed previously, hypertext is premised on multiplicity—multiple texts, multiple readings, multiple authors. Therefore, the arguments I make in the hypertextual narranalytic portion of this study (i.e., the "data" stored on CD, not chapter 4) need not be internally consistent or supported in a hierarchical fashion, as in the Toulmin model. Since I am not bound by the conventions of print, or the rules of the zero-sum game, I am free to make two or more "mutually exclusive" claims on the same subject. I might also make a claim and not support it. I can digress and develop a line of argument as far as I may wish, even if it completely contradicts another argument I've made elsewhere in the text. Or I might begin to develop an argument or tell a story and

abruptly abandon it, perhaps in mid-sentence. Closure and internal consistency, then, are not at all necessary in hypertext. The logic of hypertext is not the logic of conventional text.

Representationalism Meets Hypertext

In objectivist epistemologies, knowledge is represented as explanation. But taking a "second-person" stance (Code, *WCSN* 80-87) entails treating a hypertext as a living organism, and this epistemological position yields understanding rather than explanation—or to avoid the binary, *partial understanding* and/or *partial explanation.* Accordingly, since full explanation is not necessary, I have not attempted to represent *Quibbling*, *Patchwork Girl*, or any of the other hypertexts considered in this study. A study of literary hypertext need not try to represent that work, for to represent a literary work implies an effort to control its multiplicity. Any representation will account for only a small part or a single instantiation of the entire work.

Literary hypertexts are read one lexia at a time; therefore, the hypertext as constructed by the wreater, or the network of lexias, exists only in that wreater's mind. The single lexia "flickers" before the wreater and then recedes back into unreadable code, but a pattern of lexias may be held in "suspended animation" in a reader's mind.[9] When the wreater presses the enter key or clicks the mouse to bring up a new lexia, the lexia that was "present" becomes "absent"—that is, the lexia shifts from a readable surface

[9] See N. Katherine Hayles's "Virtual Bodies and Flickering Signifiers" and "Print is Flat, Code is Deep."

pattern to a "deep," unreadable code. Again, the text is *a pattern, not a presence*; the network of lexias is a pattern held in suspension in the wreater's mind as a more or less amorphous gestalt—i.e., a global sense of the text. Hayles speaks of "the informational structure that emerges from the interplay between pattern and randomness," and she goes on to argue that "randomness is involved because it is only against the background or possibility of nonpattern that pattern can emerge. Whenever pattern exists, randomness is implicit as the contrasting term that allows pattern to be understood as such" (76, 78). The text, then, is experienced as a dynamic interplay of pattern and randomness. The textual patterns, in other words, are transient (Hayles, "VB" 89). Furthermore, given that patterns are held in a sort of transient suspension in the wreater's mind, they are unlikely to be recovered or repeated—or replicated in the scientific sense.

Of course, one might read a hypertext many times and attempt to represent those encounters in a single critical essay or even a collection of essays, but the representation would remain partial. Critics who seek to represent a hypertext author's intentions will likely focus on the connections between lexias, or the design implicit in the links; however, those links are indeterminate, inasmuch as the wreater is free to follow or not follow them. Furthermore, a critic attempting to represent a literary hypertext would, following the logic of print, attempt to present it as a whole; yet wholeness is the dream of an uncontested, non-partial reality. Each text, like each person's lived experience, is irreducible to a single, coherent meaning; the text is a contested site, and one representation never completely erases contradictory representations; other texts remain

visible below the surface as in a palimpsest.[10]

Writing, particularly since the seventeenth century, has been driven by representationalism—i.e., the belief that a remembered experience or no-longer-present reality can be symbolically or linguistically re-presented, that is, made present again. A biography, for example, is designed to re-present a life that is inaccessible in itself. A postcard featuring a photograph or painting of the Eiffel Tower is supposed to make this object present to a person who cannot visit the actual tower. According to representationalism, to *see* is to know; to see an object itself or the representation of that object is to know it.

The technology of writing, at least as it has been employed in the West, is supposed to allow writers to master reality or nature—i.e., to "capture" reality like a realistic painter captures a scene, or to fix reality in space; writing has been used this way at least since Aristotle began to systematize the discourses of logic and science, and especially so since the Enlightenment. A closely associated phenomenon, discussed in *Decolonizing Methodologies* by Maori scholar Linda Tuhiwai Smith, is that, since the fifteenth century, the technology of writing has been used by Western colonizers to represent and to oppress indigenous peoples throughout the globe, for example, by using the colonizer's texts to educate indigenous children (35-37). Of course, the same may be said of Roman imperialism and rhetoric, which, as an administrative rhetoric, served to facilitate

[10] My first encounter with the word *palimpsest* was in Michael Joyce's *Othermindedness*, where he uses the term "present-tense palimpsest." John F. Barber also uses the palimpsest metaphor in "Following in the Footsteps of the Ancestors: From Songlines to Illuminated Digital Palimpsests" in *New Words, New Worlds.*

imperial administration. Indigenous peoples are fixed on a hierarchy of value and also in a geographical space—that is, fixed on a map that often does match their movements—very much like words are fixed on the surface of a page, which returns us to the theme of space-time. Tuhiwai Smith argues,

> Space is often viewed in Western thinking as being static or divorced from time. This view generates ways of making sense of the world as a 'realm of stasis', well-defined, fixed and without politics. This is particularly relevant in relation to colonialism. The establishment of military, missionary or trading stations, the building of roads, ports and bridges, the clearing of brush and the mining of minerals all involved processes of marking, defining and controlling space. (52)

Thus, the mastery of reality, nature, and indigenous peoples are all associated in the same project—i.e., the attempted control of an uncontrollable Other. Representationalism is supported by a *rhetoric of control*. Naming, measuring, and map-making are but a few means of achieving a tenuous control over a multiple, mobile reality.

By dividing reality, nature, or lived experience into discrete units, the chaos of life may be brought under some degree of control. Words, sentences, paragraphs, pages, chapters, books, and so forth constitute one category of discrete, measurable units. A singular narrative line is another discrete unit. And although a hypertext lexia is a discrete unit, it is the connections between lexias (i.e., the hypertextual patterns) not the individual lexias, that are most important in the hypertext wreating experience. But, again, this pattern only exists in a particular wreater's mind. Consequently, the hypertext narrative cannot be controlled like sentences and paragraphs fixed on a page.

A crucial tool of representationalism is the unilinear narrative. Through unilinear, singular, or serial narrative we represent reality as we have experienced it or as it might be experienced; we re-present what is temporarily (or temporally) present to our senses and minds. Allesandra Tanesini argues that representationalism is a fundamental tenet of mainstream epistemology: "According to this view, when we think about knowledge we must think of a world composed of objects-with-causal-properties which individuals attempt to know. Thus, we have individuals on one side, and things on the other" (9). The paradigmatic objects with causal properties are medium-sized objects. But what is lost or erased in linear, cause-and-effect, analytic logic, as well as in linear narrative, is the complexity of interactions between entities, or the web of relations that constitutes lived experience. As Hayles argues, the relations between entities, rather than the entities themselves, constitute reality as we know it ("FM" 3). Furthermore, most relationships are far too complex to be adequately represented by cause-and-effect logic or serial narratives.

Both representationalism and conventional authorial intention break down in hypertextual environments. Hypertext authors do not know precisely what their readers will read because they do not know the manner or order in which their texts will be read. And in the case of a text composed for a read-write interface, the author does not know what the reader may write into the text or what links may be added or deleted. Thus, in Ricouer's terms, the reader appropriates the text—appropriation being the counterpart of distantiation (113).

Admittedly, a very similar argument could be made about conventional text: Every

reader reads the text as she chooses and makes the text her own, and the author has no control over the way readers interact with the text. As Judith Fetterley discusses, one may "become a resisting reader rather than an assenting reader" (996). That is, a reader may resist the author's intention or read against the grain of a work. Every work is instantiated by readers as a text; therefore, once a work is published it is out of the author's hands. Accordingly, in distinguishing between work and text, Barthes asserts, "The author is reputed the father an owner of his *work*: literary science therefore teaches respect for the manuscript and the author's declared intentions [. . .]. As for the *text*, it reads without the inscription of the Father" (903, emphasis added). In an interesting parallel, Haraway claims that "cyborgs are not reverent; they do not re-member the cosmos" (150). In other words, for the cyborg, as well as for the postmodern reader, the "original text" is not of compelling interest.

Although Barthes was referring to avant-garde print literature, and he cites mostly French authors (e.g., Proust, Genet, Bataille, Mallarme), the read-write hypertext interface takes the process of textual appropriation beyond what is possible in print. With such an interface, authors retain very little control over their representations. Again, the wreater is free to rearrange lexias, add or delete links, annotate and edit text, add entire new sections of text, and so forth. Hence the actual words on the screen, not merely their intended interpretation, may be changed. In sum, despite author-control features such as Storyspace's guard field, it is difficult to argue that hypertext authors retain as much control over their literary representations as the conventional author does.

Linear Perspective

On the following pages I discuss the historical foundations of representationalism, along with the connections between representationalism and hypertext theory, feminist epistemology, and feminist rhetoric.

Representationalism is closely linked to Renaissance linear perspective. In the early fifteenth century the invention of mathematical linear perspective allowed for the translation of three-dimensional natural phenomena onto two-dimensional surfaces, producing virtually realistic copies. According to Berger, "[T]he metaphorical model for the function of painting at this time was the mirror" (*The Moment* 16). In other words, Renaissance linear perspective was founded on the classical principle of *mimesis*—the faithful imitation of nature.

For Renaissance scientists and artists "the essence of physical reality was understood in terms that could be reduced to basic mathematical principles" (Dauben, unpaginated online text). In their devotion to mathematics, Renaissance artists and scientists were rediscovering the geometric, spatial orientation of Pythagoras and Plato. Moreover, the rediscovery and elaboration of mathematical principles led to a profound cultural reorientation. As Joseph W. Dauben states, "It is clear that renaissance [sic] artists were seeking a new world, thanks in part to mathematics and the new perspective, literally, that mathematics provided." Mathematical linear perspective, which was primarily a tool of graphic artists and architects, was later combined with Descartes' philosophical dualism to create "Cartesian perspectivalism," also known as the representational theory of knowledge (Bolter and Grusin 79). Thus, since the mid-seventeenth century

"philosophers have understood knowledge in terms of representations" (Tanesini 9).

In terms of the present study, the crucial point is that only from a distance can something be seen as a whole, or in perspective. Berger argues that the Renaissance "attitude towards nature" was based on "the underlying faith [. . .] that the eye, if used properly, could reveal the truth about the objective world" (*Toward Reality* 100). In this case, the proper use of the eye implies distance. Linear perspective produces the representation of a whole object from a distance. From an up-close, engaged position, one's vision is partial. For example, a pillar, an arch, or a door may be seen, but the entire frontal view of a large building cannot be seen without the observer backing up some distance, or assuming a "better" vantage point. Thus, objective distance is believed to be requisite for a true or complete representation of the *other*. Representationalism is premised on a clear subject/object split, which implies that the ideal observer is not at all caught up in the representation of the other. That is, the self, even the unconscious self, must not be projected onto the other; the subject must not distort "reality" in any way.

Cartesian perspectivalism dominated Western culture from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth century by allowing the Cartesian subject to control space from a single vantage point (Bolter and Grusin 24). It must be emphasized that this single vantage point lies *outside* the frame of the picture; the viewer is not included or implicated in the picture. One of the most famous examples of linear perspective is Leonardo da Vinci's *Last Supper*, which gives a clear sense of an observer standing just outside the represented scene (Figure 3.1). The implied observer stands outside the frame yet in a central position—i.e., on a line perpendicular to the table in Leonardo's painting.

The viewer has a privileged vantage point from which to *take in* the whole scene. Furthermore, this single vantage point is closely associated with the singular, phallocentric narrative. More directly: The implied viewer of Leonardo's painting is male. Moreover, inasmuch as Christ is clearly the central figure in the painting, the viewer may identify with Christ.

By contrast with the viewer of the *Last Supper*, the hypertext wreater is, for all intents and purposes, positioned *inside* the frame/text. Furthermore, the wreater's position is not central; she or he stands within the frame and *off-center*. One might compare the hypertext wreater's position to that of the implied viewer of a Cubist painting, such as Picasso's *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon* (Figure 3.2). Berger asserts that in Picasso's Cubist work "there is no longer a centre upon which the whole picture is focused. [. . . As] you look at the Picasso, you can allow for the reality of the scene being recognized from any viewpoint" (*Toward Reality* 103-104). Cubism, in other words, is multiperspectival. As Berger writes, "The Cubists established the principle of using multiple viewpoints *within* the picture" (110, emphasis original). If the picture has no center or pre-established focal point, the viewer necessarily stands off-center. In addition to the viewer's position being inside the picture and off-center, it is also partial. Thus, in a Cubist picture, the "spectator has to find his place within the content whilst the complexity of the forms and the 'discontinuity' of the space remind him that his view from that place is bound to only partial" (Berger, *The Moment* 25). The view is partial because the "truth" of the world or nature cannot be captured by vision alone. The Cubist's "sense of the truth had gone beyond the immediate evidence supplied to their eyes" (Berger, *Toward Reality* 101).

Along with the implied viewer's off-center position, the flatness of representation violates the Renaissance principle of depth (Gaggi 17). In other words, there is no visual depth because the viewer, being inside the frame, is not far enough removed from the image. In Cubism, the "viewing-point of Renaissance perspective, fixed and outside the picture, but to which everything within the picture was drawn, has become the field of vision which is the picture itself" (Berger, *The Moment* 22). Hence, rather than experiencing a firm sense of spatial orientation and depth perception, the viewer of Picasso's painting is likely to feel disoriented, very much like the hypertext wreater.

Hypertext is fragmentary and multiple because the wreater's position is *mobile* rather than fixed; the wreater moves around inside the text, as if she were inhabiting a virtual reality environment. Analogously, Berger writes, "The Cubists were concerned with movement and wanted to prove that space itself was a process" (*Toward Reality* 102). In other words, both the hypertext wreater and the viewer of a Cubist painting experience space as a process that they themselves move within, as opposed to a screen onto which objective reality, or substance, may be projected. The emphasis on process over substance in Cubism is close to what Hayles discusses as pattern over presence. Hence, in the following quote from Berger, we might substitute the word *pattern* for process and behavior, and *presence* for substance: "Darwin, Marx, Freud, were all concerned with revealing new processes, while the advent of modern physics meant, exactly, that the notion of substance had to be replaced by the notion of behavior" (102).

With hypertext, virtual reality, and Cubism, one's sense of the "mindbody" changes. As I stated in chapter 1, citing Hayles, "the body" is the human form seen from without,

and as such it is a cultural construction, while "embodiment" is the subjective, inner experience of one's physical form. But beyond the body/embodiment binary lies the mindbody, which is the integration of the body and embodiment (Hayles, "FM" 3). The mindbody begins with the inner sense of embodiment and extends outward to the surrounding environment through the experience of relationality and pattern; that is, as patterns are experienced within and without the body/embodiment binary dissolves.

The inside/outside binary breaks down when we shift from presence to pattern. From the perspective of the conventional presence/absence binary, the wreater's position is paradoxical or ambiguous, inasmuch as the wreater is partially inside and partially outside the text—i.e., partly present in and partly absent from the text. Analogously, for a participant in virtual reality the physical body, called "meat" in William Gibson's *Neuromancer*, remains outside the virtual space. From the more sophisticated perspective of pattern/randomness, however, the paradox dissolves; the patterned experience of the mindbody simply extends into the surrounding environment, even into a virtual environment. The inside/outside binary is simply not relevant—it doesn't make sense—from the perspective of the mindbody.

Modernist literary criticism was formulated with within the context of the presence/absence binary, according to which neither the author nor the reader are permitted inside the literary work. Authorial intent may not be taken as a significant presence, and the reader's affective response is not a reliable indicator of the quality of a

work.[12] Modernist criticism, furthermore, strives to account for the work as a whole. But critics of modernism question "the assumption that there is a sense, that it is embedded or encoded in the text, and that it can be taken in at a single glance" (Fish 982). Insofar as critical distance is required to take in the work as a whole, the reader/critic must stand outside the text. Hence, the "goal is to settle on a meaning, and the procedure involves first stepping back from the text, and then putting together or otherwise calculating the discrete units of significance it contains" (Fish 982). The procedure Fish critiques is thoroughly Cartesian, inasmuch as it relies on distance, spatial orientation, and reducing complex phenomena to discrete units.

A hypertext that appears on a screen one lexia at a time cannot be taken in "at a glance." By contrast with a hypertext, one can easily and quickly scroll through a linear digital text without affecting the order of the text at all; the page sequence, if there are page numbers—or simply the sequence of sentences and paragraphs—remains the same. In a hypertext, by contrast, the sequence of lexias is indeterminate. Even if the sequence can be tracked or recorded, different readings yield different sequences. Thus, inasmuch as the entire text cannot be taken in at a glance, the *seeing-is-knowing* metaphor breaks down with hypertext.

The Tactile Epistemic and Virtual Touching

The gaze belongs to the visual epistemic. But in contrast to the dominant visual

[12] I am alluding here to the intentional and affective fallacies as formulated W.K. Wimsatt and Monroe C. Beardsley.

epistemic, Irigaray claims that woman prefer to know through touch rather than sight (1468). Knowing by touching might be called a tactile epistemic. Knowing another living organism comes through interaction, that is, by getting up-close. This perspective amounts to an *embodied epistemology*. One cannot come to know another living being by remaining apart, and the same principle applies to the process of coming to know a text.

In arguing that one must get up-close in order to know another, I do not wish to exclude electronic, or "virtual," human contact. Experiences of the mindbody change with technological and cultural changes. Hayles asserts, "Given market forces already at work, it is virtually [. . .] certain that increasingly we will live, work, and play in environments that construct us as embodied virtualities" ("VB" 91). Two or more people might come to know each other intimately over a distance of thousands of miles through an electronic medium such as a MOO, a chat room, or e-mail. There are many avenues for overcoming distance, and distance is not always physical, as two people who are quite close physically may be miles apart emotionally or cognitively.

The argument that physical proximity is necessary to get to know another person, or that physical touching is necessary, only makes sense within the context of the presence/absence binary. Hence, feminist rhetoricians who wish to intervene in the masculinist rhetorical tradition might shift their focus from presence/absence to pattern/randomness and from body/embodiment to the mindbody. Relationships are patterns, and physical proximity, or presence, is not a necessary element of a relationship. Thus, in emphasizing the tactile epistemic, I wish to incorporate "virtual touching" on an

equal footing with physical touching. A relationship is the experience of a pattern between two or more entities, and virtual touching is founded on the experience of pattern—finding, constructing, intervening in, and altering patterns. With regard to hypertext, then, active hypertext wreaters who intervene in textual patterns may be said to virtually touch the text.

An engaged wreater converses with the text, rather than analyzing or explaining it from a distance. Knowing is not just seeing, or even being seen. Knowing involves, among other experiences, listening and being listened to, seeing and being seen, and also (virtual) touching. Knowing is intersubjective because the knower is also known. In Martin Buber's terms, this encounter is an I-Thou relation rather than an I-it relation (5); it is not a subject-object encounter, but an intersubjective relationship—i.e., an intersubjective pattern.

Visual perception of an object, such as a full frontal view of a large architectural structure, is supposed to grant a viewer knowledge of that object. But rather than merely seeing an object, coming to know a hypertext involves the ordering the lexias, or constructing the text, which suggests increased user-engagement. By way of the interface, the user touches the text. That is, by touching the keyboard and manipulating the mouse, the user touches the text in a virtual sense—yet the word "virtual" need not imply a *lesser* experience because there is no other way to touch electronic text. Obviously, electronic text cannot be physically touched or "nailed down." Hence, in a hypertextual environment, *(virtual) touching-is-knowing* might supplant the ancient seeing-is-knowing metaphor.

Seeing and Controlling

Feminist theorists, including those seeking to rearticulate feminist rhetoric, are obligated to interrogate or complicate binaries, such as the visual epistemic/tactile epistemic binary. I do not wish to argue that the visual epistemic is insignificant or that (virtual) touching ought to take precedence over seeing. Nonetheless, the hegemony of the visual epistemic must be challenged. Moreover, given the significance of conversation in feminist rhetorics and epistemologies, the aural epistemic must not be "overlooked."

The long history of visual metaphors has rendered them intuitive; that is to say, the seeing-is-knowing metaphor has been naturalized and established as common sense. But, from a feminist or postmodern perspective, the drawback of the visual epistemic is that it encourages knowers to think of themselves as separate from the known—i.e., as subjects spatially distant from objects. In other words, the principle of objective distance and the seeing-is-knowing metaphor are inextricably linked. We even refer to ideologies and philosophies as a "worldviews."

The visual epistemic is central to Platonism. In the allegory of the cave, for instance, the sun represents truth, and light enables philosophical vision (*The Republic*, Part 7, Book 7). Yet, a fundamental contradiction in Platonic philosophy, which is brought out in the *Phaedrus*, concerns the visual epistemic—or more specifically, literacy. Writing and reading are fundamentally visual and spatial, but Plato privileged speech, which is aural and temporal, over writing—all the while *writing* some of greatest literary-philosophical

works in Western history. Nonetheless, no matter how eloquently Plato discounted the visual-spatial *techne* of literacy in favor or the (elitist) oral dialectic, his epistemology is thoroughly visual-spatial. For Plato, as well as for Descartes, to know is to see clearly. We *see* what something or someone *means*. Hence, the Platonic-Cartesian epistemology, or its recent manifestation, twentieth-century positivism, "produces the folk-wisdom that enjoins people to go and see for themselves, it upholds the assumption that 'seeing is believing,' and grants overriding credence to 'eye-witness evidence'" (Code, *RS* 167). Eyewitness evidence, then, is consistently granted far more credibility than *mere hearsay*.

Hearsay, which we may classify as an aural epistemic, has been consistently denigrated by dominant Western cultural institutions, most obviously in the courtroom.[13] Moreover, hearsay is also feminized and trivialized in the notion of gossip. Furthermore, conversation and gossip occur in the temporal dimension. Thus, given the tendency of one element of a binary opposition to eliminate the other, the logical culmination of a visual-spatial epistemic would be the exclusion of the aural-temporal epistemic from all elite or serious cultural institutions and functions. In addition to legal injunctions against uncorroborated hearsay, we have the traditional schoolroom injunction against talking. Durable, privileged (and privileging) knowledge, according to this paradigm, is taken in visually through written texts, despite the fact that students are also expected to spend a great deal of time listening to teachers. But even the word *lecture* means to read to an audience from a written text.

[13] To qualify this claim, I should note that I recently learned that hearsay is admissible in U.S. military courts.

While knowledge is taken in through the eyes and the ears,[14] knowledge, at least in cultures controlled by written texts, is not generally considered to be generated by conversation. Insofar as listening is valued, it is *listening without talking*. In other words, one-way, monological, often hierarchical information flow has traditionally been privileged over dialogue and colloquy. Plato's criticism of literacy was based, in part, on the assumption that the reader cannot converse with the written text (*Phaedrus* 140). The text may "speak" to readers, but readers are not to speak back to or question the text—the text teaches and the student silently learns. Consequently, the idea of a wreater writing herself into a text is a heretical notion for mainstream Western epistemology.

The closer one approaches to an other, as in writing oneself into a text, the less control one is likely to retain over that other; that is to say, as the self draws closer and becomes implicated in the other, control slips away. Thus, if a person, entity, or text is to be controlled, it must be clearly *other*. Consequently, control from a distance, or "remote control," is a primary value of objectivist epistemologies. The Panopticon, a concept invented in the early-nineteenth century by Utilitarian philosopher Jeremy Bentham and popularized and elaborated by Michel Foucault, comes to mind here. The ultimate surveillance technology, the Panopticon (root meaning, all-eye), allows seeing without being seen.[15] The Panopticon has received a great deal of attention within cultural

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[14] Paul of Tarsus (St. Paul) wrote, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (*Romans* 10:17).

[15] In *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, Foucault writes, "We know the principle on which [Bentham's Panopticon] was based: at the periphery, an annular building; at the center, a tower [. . .] pierced with wide windows that open onto the inner side of the ring; the peripheric building is divided into cells, each of width extends the whole width of the building; they have two windows, one on the inside,

studies, critical theory, and other fields. But with regard to hypertext, the point I wish to make is that while the overseer in the Panopticon occupies a (phallic) tower in the center of a circular architectural structure, I have claimed that the hypertext wreater, like the viewer of a Cubist painting, is positioned off-center. In other words, the off-center position is not a position of control.

From Places to Spaces

I outline below a vision of a literary hypertext as a *space* rather than *place*. Michel de Certeau draws a very productive distinction between places and spaces:

> A place (*lieu*) is the order (of whatever kind) in accord with which elements are distributed in relationships of coexistence. [. . .] The law of the 'proper' rules the place: the elements taken into consideration are *beside* one another, each situated in its own 'proper' and distinct location [. . .]. A *space* exists when one takes into consideration vectors of direction, velocities, and time variables. Thus space is composed of intersections of mobile elements. [. . .] [I]n relation to place, space is like the word that is spoken. (117)

Spaces, then, are dynamic; they are "polymorphously perverse," featuring highly mobile, unstable elements. The multiple, nomadic, promiscuous self is such a mobile element.

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corresponding to the windows of the tower; the other, on the outside, allows the light to cross the cell from one end to the other. All that is needed, then, is to place a supervisor in a central tower and to shut up in each cell a madman, a patient, a condemned man, a worker or a schoolboy. By the effect of the backlighting, one can observe from the tower [. . .] the small captive shadows in the cells of the periphery. They are like so many cages, so many small theatres, in which each actor is alone, perfectly individualized an constantly visible. [. . .] the Panopticon is a machine for dissociating the see/being seen dyad: in the

Margaret Morrison speaks of "the jiggliness, the dynamic itself of constantly slipping in and out of subject positions, so that one never knows who or what one is with any certainty or how one is being perceived. [. . .] [O]ne constantly enriches and affirms life by continuing to be mobile" (213). Promiscuous subjects do not stay in their proper places. De Certeau states further that a "*space is a practiced place*. Thus the street geometrically defined by urban planning is transformed into space by walkers. In the same way, an act of reading is the space produced by the practice of a particular place: a written text, i.e., a place constituted by a system of signs" (117).

It is important to understand, however, that places are not transformed into spaces merely by being used; they have to used, at least sometimes, in ways other than intended by their designers or produces. For instance, a city street grid is transformed from a place to a space only when drivers begin to break traffic laws or walkers begin to J-walk or otherwise break the rules laid down by the city planners. As long as walkers strictly follow the rules, that place remains a place. De Certeau writes that "one can analyze the microbe-like, singular and plural practices which an urbanistic system was supposed to administer and suppress" (de Certeau 96). In other words, disobedient, unpredictable actions, by working against the grain of imposed regulations, produce spaces. Referencing Kenneth Burke's pentad (*GM* 136), we can say that human subjects, even when they are relatively weak, are able to *act* purposefully within spaces, as opposed to *being moved* as objects within places.

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peripheric ring, one is totally seen, without ever seeing; in the central tower, one sees everything without ever being seen" (200-202).

De Certeau's work is to a great extent a critique of consumerism. He argues that consumers, due to their alienation from or nonparticipation in the dominant system of production, often use tools or products in ways that are contrary to their designs. De Certeau presents an example, in the form of a historical case study, to elucidate how consumers often subvert the designs of producers, in this way becoming producers themselves:

> Thus the spectacular victory of Spanish colonization over the indigenous Indian cultures was diverted from its intended aims by the use made of it: even when they were subjected, indeed even when they accepted their subjection, the Indians often used the laws, practices, and representations that were imposed on them [. . .] for ends other than those of their conquerors; [. . .] they subverted them from within—not by rejecting them (though that occurred as well), but by many different ways of using them in the service of rules, customs or convictions foreign to the colonization which they could not escape. (31-32)

These "rules, customs or convictions" might be called *nomoi*—i.e., the informal, provisional, orally transmitted traditions of the alien's land of origin, as distinguished from the official, written, permanent, "natural" laws, or *logoi*, enforced in the alien/nomad's current residence. In other words, *nomos* is kairotic, while *logos* has pretensions to universality.[16]

[16] See Susan Jarratt's *Rereading the Sophists: Classical Rhetoric Refigured* (pp. 74-79) for a discussion of *nomos* and *logos* in relation to feminism.

To expand on this theme, we can turn to Mary Louise Pratt's discussion of Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala, an early seventeenth-century Andean scribe living under Spanish imperial rule. Guaman Poma, whom Pratt describes as "a conquered subject using the conqueror's language to construct a parodic, oppositional representation of the conquerors own speech," wrote a letter to King Philip III of Spain consisting of almost eight hundred pages of written text and four hundred pages of captioned line drawings (584). This epistle, titled *The First New Chronicle and Good Government*, never reached its addressee but was discovered in the Danish Royal Archive in Copenhagen in 1908. Pratt writes, "To grasp the import of Guaman Poma's project, one needs to keep in mind that the Incas had no system of writing. [. . .] Guaman Poma constructs his text by appropriating and adapting pieces of the representational repertoire of the invaders" (589). Echoing de Certeau, Pratt goes on to state, "While subordinate peoples do not usually control what emanates from the dominant culture, they do determine to varying extents what gets absorbed into their own and what it gets used for" (589).

Guaman Poma himself may be characterized as a site of articulation, or nodal point, between two discourses. As François Lyotard writes, "[A] person is always located at 'nodal points' of specific communication circuits, however tiny these may be. Or better: one is always located at a post through which various kinds of messages pass" (15). The nodal point is not a site of original creation, but rather a site of translation and transformation. Each nodal point, like each text, is multiple, fragmented, and partial. My point, then, is that the hypertextual wreater is a site of articulation, the site at which a textual multiplicity comes together. Without such nodal points, texts do not even exist.

This critical perspective might allow the old (early-nineteenth-century) romanticism, which was founded on the unitary, autonomous self (harkening back to the "Renaissance man"), to finally give way to a more promiscuous orientation, as reading and writing take on the qualities of humble *bricolage*.

Following Code, I maintain that feminist researchers and writers should take their subjective positions into account, as opposed to writing from a distanced, self-effacing perspective. Moreover, those who have been defined, or positioned, by other, more powerful social agents, must strive to reclaim, reconstruct, or construct their own (multiple, contradictory, partial) identities. Such feminist-authored texts might be described as "autoethnographic." As Pratt writes,

> Guaman Poma's *New Chronicle* is [. . .] an autoethnographic text, by which I mean a text in which people undertake to describe themselves in ways that engage with representations others have made of them. Thus if ethnographic texts are those in which European metropolitan subjects represent to themselves their others (usually their conquered others), autoethnographic texts are representations that the so-defined others construct in response to or in dialogue with those texts. (585).

We might characterize such a text as a patchwork or *bricolage*, Claude Levi-Strauss' term for a work of art or cultural practice assembled from "odd and ends" that are ready at hand. We may associate *bricolage*, which is a kind of recycling (Levi-Strauss 17-22), with the notion of "repurposing," as this term is used by webpage designers—i.e., "the taking of content that already exists (as digital files, printed or broadcast materials) and

re-formatting them as Web page content" (*Client Help Desk*).[17] A *bricoleur* is one who "makes do" with available materials and tools rather than creating from scratch. Guaman Poma's text, in other words, was assembled from bits and pieces of his native discourse and that of the Spanish colonizers. Feminists might undertake similar projects using the raw materials, including technologies and texts, originally created to serve the interests of the mainstream, patriarchal West.

Immediacy and Hypermediacy

At this point it may be useful to introduce two terms analyzed by Bolter and Grusin: *immediacy* and *hypermediacy.*[18] Immediacy and hypermediacy are defined, respectively, as "the transparent presentation of the real and the enjoyment of the opacity of media themselves" (21). In other words, immediacy signifies direct, unmediated experience, whereas hypermediacy, as the polar opposite of immediacy, flaunts the opacity of media. The general principles of immediacy and hypermediacy are not original to Bolter and Grusin. The words *transparent* and *opaque* are essentially synonymous with immediate and hypermediated, respectively. According to the logic of immediacy, the subject looks *through*, and perhaps *past*, the medium, whereas with hypermediacy the subject looks *at* the medium.

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[17] *Client Help Desk*. QLM Marketing. 30 June 2002. <http://www.clienthelpdesk.com/dictionary/repurpose.html>.

[18] A third concept discussed by Bolter and Grusin is remediation, "the representation of one medium in another" (45); however, this concept is less germane to the present discussion than the concepts of immediacy and hypermediacy. The concept of remediation is Bolter and Grusin's main theoretical contribution, although their discussion of immediacy and hypermediacy is illuminating.

Historically, immediacy has been privileged over hypermediacy. "In formal terms, the desire for immediacy is the desire to get beyond the medium to the objects of representation themselves" (Bolter and Grusin 83). Immediacy, furthermore, makes substantial use of mathematical linear perspective, inasmuch as these techniques are employed to represent the unmediated gaze. The problem, at least from an absolutist standpoint, is that pure immediacy is unattainable because all experience is mediated to some degree; that is, all experience is characterized by varying degrees of opacity. As Bolter and Grusin claim, "[T]here is nothing prior to or outside the act of mediation" (58). Language itself mediates between language users and reality. The nervous system also mediates sensory experience. Immediacy, in other words, is a utopian dream.

Representation is mediated on some point along a continuum from immediacy to hypermediacy. On the immediacy end of the continuum, representation is nearly unfiltered, while on the hypermediacy end representation is heavily filtered. In immediate representation, ideally, the space between subject and object is transparent—nothing gets in the way. Classical representation, then, strives to be as nearly direct as possible; directness is a prime virtue. Transparent immediacy, furthermore, is atemporal, inasmuch at it serves to conceal both the artist and the process of creation (Bolter and Grusin 25). How a work came to be is unimportant; therefore, the passage of time tends to be ignored. Only the finished product is worthy of notice.

The immediacy-hypermediacy continuum is also thoroughly gendered. Bolter and Grusin argue that "technologies of transparent immediacy based on linear perspective [. .

.] may all be enacting the so-called male gaze, excluding women from full participation as subjects and maintaining them as objects" (79). I will go further and argue that the immediacy-hypermediacy continuum is definitely gendered. Hypermediacy and women have much in common; or more precisely, the logic of hypermediacy and the Western ideal of "woman" have much in common. Immediacy, by contrast, is a predominately masculine ideal, and mathematical linear perspective enacts the controlling, voyeuristic, masculine gaze. According to Bolter and Grusin, "The logic of immediacy has perhaps been dominant in Western representation, at least from the Renaissance until the coming of [twentieth-century] modernism, while hypermediacy has often had to content itself with a secondary, if nonetheless important status" (34). We may easily substitute the words *men* and *women* for immediacy and hypermediacy in the above quote. Thus, with slight revision, the statement becomes: "Throughout Western history, women have had to content themselves with a secondary, if nonetheless important status." I should emphasize that when I use the terms men and women, I am referencing the West's dominant constructs of masculinity and femininity. In other words, I am referring to gender rather than sex, and also the body rather than embodiment or the mindbody.

By convention, the bodies of men fall on the transparent end of the continuum, while women's bodies are constructed as more or less opaque. For example, among the contemporary Western middle class, men's clothing is generally perceived as utilitarian, whereas women are often expected to "accessorize." According to the logic of the mind/body split, which assigns mind to man and body to woman, men are more likely to be looked *through* than looked at. In other words, men's clothing is supposed to be easily

ignored so that we may focus on the man's mind. By contrast, a woman's clothing, like her body, is often perceived an end in itself—i.e., something to be looked *at* and commented on. An example may be taken from Carol Mattingly's discussion of her archival research in feminist rhetoric:

> As I studied nineteenth-century records, I could hardly miss the numerous references to women speakers' appearance and its significant relationship to ethos. [. . .] [N]early every primary source I read [. . .] repeatedly highlighted how women speakers looked, especially what they were wearing [. . .]. [T]he absence of such allusions to men [. . .] made clear that evaluating women by masculine standards provides a glaringly incomplete understanding of the issues women speakers negotiated; the gendered depiction of women—the focus on their bodies and dress as they struggled for representation and power—determined ethical acceptance to a degree men never had to consider. [. . .] Accounts of women speakers detailed their dress and appearance before presenting their words—if, in fact, they considered their words at all.

In a similar vein, bell hooks writes:

> The person who is most powerful has the privilege of denying their body. I remember as an undergraduate I had white male professors who wore the same tweed jacket and rumpled shirt or something, but we all knew we had to pretend. You would never comment on his dress, because to do so would be a sign of your own intellectual lack. The point was we should all respect that he's there to be a mind and not a body. (137)

It is vital to understand that dress, accessories, and the body itself are media—they mediate identity and ethos. If we temporally bracket considerations of class and race, men are typically granted a great deal more license when it comes to their outward appearance—their clothing as well as their body shape or size. In general, men are looked *through* far more often than they are looked *at*, and men marked as professional or intellectual are especially likely to be look through. By contrast, even female intellectuals, as indicated by Mattingly's research, are more frequently looked *at* than *through*. In other words, the subject positions occupied by women tend to fall toward the hypermediated end of the spectrum, although a moderate degree of mediation is, of course, far more common than full-blown, perhaps deliberately hyperbolic, hypermediacy (e.g., in popular culture, Madonna or Cher).

Hypermediacy is a visual style that "privileges fragmentation, indeterminacy, and heterogeneity" (Mitchell 8; qtd. in Bolter and Grusin 31). Thus, the fragmented body, as illustrated by the Patchwork Girl image (Figure 3.3b), is hypermediated. Such visual texts may be deployed to thwart masculinist control, which suggests that hegemonic *points of view*, or privileged vantage points, may be undercut. In film, for example, if one must visually attend to rapidly shifting shots of particular scene, or even different parts of a body, the sustained voyeuristic gaze becomes a harmless "glance" (Bolter and Grusin 81). The image flickers before the viewer, as opposed to sitting still as a passive target. *Flickering* implies a succession of moments or the passage of time, whereas the controlling gaze is static and spatial—i.e., atemporal.

Although I have associated immediacy with masculinist epistemologies, I am not

arguing that hypermediacy, its complement, is necessarily a feminist value. If this were the case, women would always welcome the masculine gaze. Rather, my position is that feminism should go beyond the binary opposition of immediacy and hypermediacy—or in other words, feminism might hover at a level between "earthy" hypermediacy and the "ethereal" immediacy. Feminists may choose to emphasize immediacy or hypermediacy in different rhetorical situations. At times, direct, clear communication is the best option, while at other times "rhetorical flourishes" or other forms of indirectness, perhaps even tactical masquerade, may be warranted.

Historical Patterns

Scholars have been discussing transparency and opacity for a long time. In a work published several years prior to Bolter and Grusin's *Remediation*, Richard Lanham presented a transparency/opacity polarity very much like Bolter and Grusin's immediacy/hypermediacy polarity. In his "bi-stable" matrix, Lanham places *unselfconscious* and *selfconscious* on opposite sides of a spectrum, with "ordinary life" falling mostly in the middle of this spectrum (Lanham 14-15). Transparent and opaque artistic works are classified, respectively, as unselfconscious and selfconscious. Lanham argues that (transparent) philosophy and (opaque) rhetoric have played off of each other throughout the history of Western thought and education, with one holding sway over the other at different historical moments. Lanham argues that the Greek philosophers, particularly Plato and Aristotle, championed transparency, while the Sophists preferred something closer to opacity (15). That is, while the philosophers did their best to look

through media (e.g., language, style, narrative, the body, delivery), the Sophists foregrounded rhetorical media. The lyrical, "spellbinding" language of Sophistic rhetoric, probably best exemplified in Gorgias' *Encomium to Helen*, may be classified as opaque (i.e., hypermediated), while the spare prose of Aristotle's *Rhetoric* or *Politics* is much closer to the transparent (i.e., immediate) end of the spectrum.

Under the Platonic-Aristotelian historical hegemony, philosophy has been privileged over rhetoric. While the Sophists had endowed rhetoric with a sense of autonomy as a legitimate *way of knowing*, Plato and Aristotle, and later Augustine, would place rhetoric in the service of philosophy. Hence, although Lanham does not explore this issue, the polarity of rhetoric and philosophy is deeply gendered. As Jarratt has observed, insofar as rhetoric, or Rhetorica, is denigrated as cookery, cosmetology, or practical knowledge, it is closely associated with the Western ideal of woman (xvi). By contrast, philosophy has been consistently constructed as masculine. As is well known, Plato classified rhetoric as a mere "knack," akin to the domestic arts mentioned above, rather than a legitimate, masculine *techne* such as medicine (*Gorgias* 70-71). And in fourth-century BCE Athens, as in our own era, cooking and cosmetology, insofar as they were domestic arts, were associated with women.

Mediated Interfaces

But what does all of this have to do with literary hypertext? First of all, hypertexts are multiple texts, and within the context of digital technology "hypermediacy manifests as multiplicity" (Bolter and Grusin 33). First-generation, text-rich hypertext may be

classified as hypermediated to the extent that the wreater must actively engage with the interface. Storyspace's windowed interface, moreover, expresses multiplicity; it disperses rather than unifies space. As Bolter and Grusin argue, the "windowed interface does not attempt to unify space around any one point of view. [. . .] The multiplicity of windows and the heterogeneity of their contents mean that the user is repeatedly brought back into contact with the interface" (33). The Storyspace interface encourages the wreater's view to "flit" between several types of windows, writing spaces, and the four graphical views (i.e., map, tree map, outline, and chart), hence disrupting the static gaze.

I have argued that engagement, as opposed to objective distantiation, is a feminist stance. In this regard, (feminist) conversation and touch may be contrasted with the (masculinist) voyeuristic gaze, although this construction should not be taken as a hard-and-fast binary opposition. Both conversation and touch entail reciprocal, mutually transformative action. And with respect to interface design, the more mediated the interface, the more reciprocity, or user-action, it requires. The Storyspace interface is anything but hidden or automated; it requires a high level of user engagement, inasmuch as the wreater must engage with the interface to construct the narrative. Single lexias must be strung together, or assembled, into a hypertext narrative (or narratives). Thus, with respect to user-engagement, Storyspace may be tentatively classified as a hypermediated textual environment.

One the other hand, first-generation, text-rich hypertext has definite qualities of *immediacy*, inasmuch as the wreater concentrates on reading alphanumeric text rather than attending to multimedia. Although Storyspace does allow for still graphics,

animation, and sound files, insofar as an author chooses to forego these features, the interface becomes more transparent. In other words, while the Storyspace author is free to compose a text anywhere along the transparent-opaque spectrum, by limiting the multimedia, the author can position the text somewhere between transparency and opacity—the author will have to decide which position along the continuum best serves her purpose. Given that the wreater must engage with the windowed interface, Storyspace hypertexts are already significantly mediated, and to add multimedia would push the hypertext further to the hypermediated end of the spectrum. The medium is always more or less foregrounded in a Storyspace hypertext; therefore, a feminist author need not fear that by limiting herself to alphanumeric text she will unintentionally replicate the immediacy of conventional text.

An interface, then, can fall anywhere along the transparent-opaque spectrum. An interface on the opaque, or hypermediated, end of the spectrum may be classified as more "rhetorical" than "philosophical." In contrast, the seamless, transparent interface would be more philosophical than rhetorical because the user looks *through* this interface at the all-important "content." The transparent interface, in other words, follows a masculinist logic because very little media stands between the user and the content.

According to the logic of immediacy, not only are the artist and the creative process concealed, but the observer hides as well. As discussed in the previous chapter, the voyeur must be concealed to derive maximum pleasure or excitement from looking. The spectator must be erased, which allows what Haraway called "the conquering gaze from nowhere" and "the god-trick trick of seeing everything from nowhere" (188, 189). In

formalist schools of literacy criticism, which I have characterized as masculinist, both the reader and the author are erased; the text is all that matters. Thus, the rationale for using a read-write hypertext interface is that writing oneself into the text is an effective means of preventing the erasure of the reader—assuming, of course, that the reader chooses not to be erased. The reader engages in a dialogue with the text, as opposed to being subjected to an oration by the autonomous text. As the reader becomes personally implicated or invested in the text, conversation and (virtual) touching replace passive looking and listening.

To sum up the argument of this chapter thus far, it may help to line up two sets of contrasting terms (Figure 3.4). As I explain below, these pairs should be taken as complementary points on a continuous spectrum rather than as binary oppositions. Historically, due to the successes of Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, Descartes, and the Enlightenment, the items in the left column have been privileged over their counterparts on the right. Nonetheless, this schematic may still be (mis)interpreted as reifying binaries. Hence, I must reiterate that these items are the abstract, idealized extremes of spectrum; between the poles are various "shades of gray." For example, the post-gender cyborg straddles the border between masculine immediacy and feminine hypermediacy. In an effort to name these shades of gray, I have, somewhat in fun, listed four neologisms below the midpoint of the spectrum: rhetorosophy, proetry, narranalysis, and seriociational text.

"Extreme meet." This, according to Burke, was Coleridge's favorite maxim (*Philosophy of Literary Form* 3). Emerson also said, "Extremes meet and there is no

better example than the haughtiness of humility."[19] With regard to my own argument, the point I wish to make in citing the above statements is that transparency and opacity are transformed into one another at their polar extremes. Lanham speaks of an "AT/THROUGH reversal [. . . or] oscillation " (43). He sees a pervasive purpose/play reversal, or an oscillation between use and ornament, in postmodernism and the digital arts (43-51). We may also think of the AT/THROUGH oscillation as a figure/ground reversal. For example, in much of Andy Warhol's work, consumer culture's objects of use (e.g., Campbell's Soup cans) were taken out of their primary context, where they were looked *through*, and represented within a frame to be looked *at*. As use becomes ornament, or as figure and ground trade places, reality is defamiliarized. Yet it is far more common to work from the other direction, turning ornament into use, as when objects of conspicuous consumption (e.g., fur coats, Rolex watches, limousines) are used primarily as signs to establish or maintain one's place in a social hierarchy.

To push this argument a step further, we can say, taking a nominalist position, that the opposing concepts do not even exist, except as words; they are simply abstractions. Immediacy and hypermediacy, masculine and feminine, prose and poetry, and so forth, do not exist in reality; they are merely words, or labels, for two positions, or points, on a line.[20] We might also call these words "placemarkers." As Guyer writes, "Closure,

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[19] I have so far been unable to track down the original sources of the Coleridge and Emerson quotes. An indirect source of the Emerson quote is *Bartlett's Familiar Quotations*. 10th edition, 1919. Available online: http://www.bartleby.com. Coleridge may have actually borrowed "Extremes meet" from Louis-Sebastien Mercier's "Les extrêmes se touchent." *Tableaux de Paris* (1782), *vol. iv. title of chap. 348.*

[20] Here I am drawing on the much-discussed work of Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, particularly their discussions of the rhizome and smooth and striated spaces in *A Thousand Plateaus*. Carolyn Guyer also

resolution, achievement, the objects of our lives are inventions that operate somewhat like navigational devices, placemarkers if you will" ("Buzz-Daze," unpaginated). In an effort to convey this nondualistic reality, I will offer as an alternate image, or metaphor, the Möbius strip, invented by mathematician August Ferdinand Möbius (1790-1868). To form a Möbius strip (Figure 3.5), one takes a long strip of paper and fastens the ends together, but in a special way. By giving the paper a half-twist before joining the ends, one joins the back side of the paper to the front side, which produces a continuous, one-sided object (Bogomolny, unpaginated). Such an image conveys what I mean by one end of a polarity being transformed into its complement.

Scripts and Archetypes

A critic might question the uniqueness of hypertext on the grounds that there has always been interaction between readers and texts, as readers are called on to "write" the "unwritten" portions of the text (Iser 956). As Iser argues "no author worth his salt will ever attempt to set the whole picture before his reader's eyes. [. . .] without elements of indeterminacy, the gaps in the text, we should not be able to use our imagination" (961). The reader, in the act of interpretation, uses her imagination to "write" the unwritten parts of the text; that is to say, the reader collaborates with both author and text to complete the text. As Barthes argues, "The Text asks of the reader a practical collaboration" (904). Hence, the conventional divisions between author, audience, text, and context do not hold

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refers to this text in her essay "Buzz-Daze Jazz and the Quotidian Stream." I will expand upon this theme in subsequent chapters.

for either modern print literature or literary hypertext. A reader who writes a portion of the text cannot remain distant from that text; she must be up-close and engaged, or in the same context, in order to fill in the textual gaps. The difference between the conventional text and hypertext must be based, then, on something other than the reader's "writing" of the unwritten parts of the text because all texts, especially modern literary texts, require such reader engagement.

The electronic read-write hypertext interface takes the reader's engagement with the text to another level—or in a *different direction*, to avoid the hierarchical implications of "another level." The unwritten parts of a hypertext are written in a literal as well as a metaphorical sense. As discussed previously, there is a danger in conflating reading and writing; therefore, I wish to make it clear that in using the terms "wreater" and "wreating" I do not mean to conflate reading and writing. Reading and writing are distinct processes, and wreating differs from both. Thus, I am arguing for an *affinity* between reading and writing, as opposed to *identity*. To conflate reading and writing is to deny the *otherness* of the text (Dasenbrock 244). But the masculinist reader, rather than attentively listening to and conversing with the text, imposes his will or interpretive frame onto the text; he lays his (male) interpretive frame over the (female) text. We might also cite Ricoeur's claim that "appropriation does not imply the secret return of the sovereign [male] subject" (113).

To tease out the difference between literally and hermeneutically "writing" the unwritten portions of a text, a different terminology may be helpful. Accordingly, at this

juncture I wish to make a distinction between what I call the *script* and the *archetype of the script* (or simply the archetype). The script may be defined as the readable orthographic marks on the page, whereas the script's archetype is the idealized script protected by copyright law. The script may be sold in the marketplace, but the script's archetype is transcendental and intangible.

As discussed previously, works and texts are quite distinct from one another. The text is a function of interpretation, while the work is a literary artifact protected by copyright law. Now, in the case of conventional text, the archetype and the work are, for all practical purposes, identical. But the hypertext work is not the same as the archetype. In fact, as I discuss further below, hypertext has no archetype. If the work and the archetype were identical, there would no justification for inventing a new term.

One difficulty with the concept of the archetype is that it is common for there to be several extant "original" manuscripts of a particular literary work, and different "authorized" versions of a work may be copyrighted and sold in the marketplace. So which is the genuine authorized version, or which script can claim the *true* archetype? My answer to this dilemma is that any copyrighted conventional work has an archetype, inasmuch as the archetype is simply a product of copyright law. Thus, the fact that many different copyrighted versions of a work may exist does not pose a problem for the concept of the archetype of the script.

In conventional print as well hypertext, the role of the reader is to hermeneutically *perform* the text. The performance is a creative collaboration between text and reader. In the language of drama, the reader would be the actor who performs, or interprets, the

writer's script. The text also has an analogue in the musical score, which must be performed if it is ever to come to life. Hans-Georg Gadamer claimed that "it is in the performance and only in it—as we see most clearly in the case of music—that we encounter the work itself, as the divine is encountered in the religious rite" (116). In adapting Gadamer's statement to my purposes, I have opted to replace the term *work* with *text* and argue that it is in the performance and only in it that we encounter the *text* itself.

Here is my rationale for inventing the concept of the archetype of the script: Literary hypertext is distinguished from the conventional literary text by the fact that *the hypertext script has no archetype.* The script must not be conflated with the lexias. Since the lexias are seen one at a time, the script only exists as a pattern in the reader's mind. In other words, while all readers may be said to "write" the texts they read in a hermeneutic sense, this process is taken a step further with hypertext, as the reader not only imaginatively writes, or performs, the text but also assembles the script. The script as a whole, or the pattern of lexias, must be assembled by the wreater and held in her imagination. Thus, while the hypertext *work* (e.g., Shelley Jackson's *Patchwork Girl*) is definitely protected by copyright law, there is no way to copyright a hypertext script that is assembled by a reader and retained only in the reader's mind. Hence, what is protected in *Patchwork Girl* is the computer code underlying the work.

Another difference between hypertext and conventional text is that, with the aid of a read-write interface, the hypertext script may be written *in* and changed, while the conventional script may only be written *on*, or perhaps *over*. Although readers of conventional texts do engage with scripts as they hermeneutically transform them into

texts, readers cannot substantially change the conventional script. While it is true that readers may add to a conventional script by writing marginalia or otherwise marking on the pages, this action does not touch the archetype. But since the hypertext script has no archetype to safeguard it, the writing the user does within a lexia actually changes the script. But again, such action has no effect on the copyright-protected code (i.e., the work); it doesn't change the product that others will purchase in the future.

Even if one concedes the claim that a hypertext script differs from a conventional script based on its lack of an archetype, one might argue that hypertexts are no different than any other form of *digital* script, inasmuch as digital scripts may be downloaded and freely revised or written in. But downloading a digital script is essentially equivalent to scanning a print script to turn into it a digital copy. The downloaded digital script and the scanned, or digitized, print script may both be freely revised; however, the archetype of the script is not touched by this process. For example, if a person downloads *Pride and Prejudice* from the World Wide Web and revises the script, this act has no effect at all on the copyrighted work. A second, significant factor is that a digitized script can be scrolled though in its entirety; the text can be taken in at a glance, so to speak, as in flipping through a print text. In the case of a hypertext, by contrast, the script is assembled from individual lexias and then "stored," if only as a general pattern, in the reader's memory. Thus, my answer to the conflation of the hypertext script and the digital script is that a conventional literary work published online still has an archetype, which is untouched by any electronic editing at the user end.

To recapitulate: In chapter one of this study, as well as earlier in this chapter, I drew

a distinction between literary works and texts. I claimed that the work is the literary artifact protected by copyright law. The text, by contrast, is a function of interpretation, inasmuch as the reader hermeneutically "writes" the "unwritten" parts of the text in the process of reading the work. Subsequently, I introduced two new concepts: the script and the archetype of the script. With respect to the text, it may still be characterized as a function of interpretation. As Iser argues, the text is something that comes into being in the "virtual dimension" between the reader and the work (958). As for the conventional literary work, it may now be redefined as *the script plus its archetype.*

Scripts and Interfaces

To make yet another fine distinction, or to split another hair, I now wish to differentiate between the script and the interface. In short, every script requires an interface, or material medium. The interface frames the script and allows it to be read. As such, the script and the interface must be distinct entities. A reader may choose to write on or over the words or illustrations on the page (i.e., the script), or she may opt to leave the script alone and write instead in the margins of the page or even on the cover or binding of the book; these other elements are what I am classifying here as the *interface.* In the case of conventional text, the interface is the material artifact that readers physically handle. The print interface is typically comprised, at a minimum, of ink and paper, and it often includes cloth, glue, cardboard, and string as well. I must emphasize that the ink on the page is not identical to the script. Ink, in and of itself, is not readable. The script is the *readable* orthographic marks on the page. The ink, therefore, belongs

with the paper and the other material properties that comprise the interface. Furthermore, if a script is not readable, it is merely ink; therefore, the script, like the text, is a function of interpretation. If a script is encountered by an illiterate person or by a speaker of another language, it is no more than ink. In other words, the script, like the text, has a relational ontology; reader and interface must come together in a hermeneutic act to generate the script. Likewise, reader and script must come together in a hermeneutic act to generate the text.

Conventional text and hypertext, then, may be compared along five axes: *work, text, script, archetype, script,* and *interface* (Figure 3.6). With respect to the work axis, the five hypertexts I have selected for this study are all protected by copyright law; therefore, they are all legitimate literary works. A work is essentially a script protected by copyright; that is to say, the author's *manu*script is raised to the level of a work by virtue of being copyrighted. The conventional work also gains a archetype at this point; it is the prototype faithfully reflected in all the scripts. The conventional script and the hypertext script differ, however, because the conventional script exists as a whole from beginning to end and may be taken it at a glance, while the hypertext script must be instantiated one lexia at a time and held in the reader's mind. The conventional script, then, is a *copy* of the archetype, and the conventional work is the script plus the archetype. But hypertext, again, has no archetype because it must be instantiated as a script (i.e., a network or pattern of lexias) by each wreater. A further difference between the conventional script and the hypertext script is that, with the aid of an electronic read-write interface, the hypertext script may be written in and changed, whereas the conventional print script

may only be written on or over. The conventional *interface* (i.e., the pages, ink, cover, etc.) may also be written on. With regard to the fourth axis, the text, conventional text and hypertext do not differ significantly. In both conventional text and hypertext, the text is a hermeneutic construction-performance of the reader, who of course must operate within the constraints imposed by the script.

To come full circle now: In chapter 1, I cited Barthes' statement that "the work can be seen (in bookshops, in catalogues, in exam syllabi), the text is a process of demonstration [. . .]; the work can be held in the hand, the text is held in language" (901). I now wish to revise Barthes' statements as follows: The *interface* can be seen (in bookshops, in catalogues, in exam syllabi), the text is a process of demonstration; the *interface* can be held in the hand, the text is held in language. Of course, the script is also a hermeneutic performance-construction. One must decode the script before she or he can construct the text. The script, however, cannot be held in the hands; it needs a material medium, or interface, to ground it.

Again, the methodology of this study presumes that hypertext readers (or wreaters) are able to write themselves into texts. We may now revise our terms to say that the read-write interface allows wreaters to write themselves into *scripts*. The text remains a hermeneutical construction, and if we wish we may speak of readers writing themselves into texts. But in this sense hypertext is no different than conventional text: both types of text come into being in the conversation between the reader and the script. The distinctive feature of an electronic read-write interface is that it allows readers to write themselves into scripts, thus becoming wreaters.

In the next chapter I discuss, in narranalytic fashion, the experience of writing myself into *Quibbling*, *Patchwork Girl*, *Cyborg: Engineering the Body Electric*, "I Have Said Nothing," and "Lust."

CHAPTER 4

A Narranalytic Reflection on the Wreating Process

How does a reader make sense of a literary hypertext? What is to be *done* with it? One thing I *cannot* do in one chapter is undertake a close reading of five literary hypertexts—in this case *Quibbling*, *Patchwork Girl*, *Cyborg: Engineering the Body Electric*, "Lust," and "I Have Said Nothing." I do not attempt a comprehensive critical treatment on any of these texts, and at times it may even seem that I touch too lightly on them. However, a close reading of these five texts would call for an entire dissertation in itself, and this dissertation is not a literary study. My focus in this chapter is on the process of reading literary hypertext. In other words, my interest is rhetorical. I am interested the ways in which the Western rhetorical concepts of writer, reader, text, and context mutate in a hypertext environment.

I have argued throughout this study that a hypertext should be treated as a living organism—but what kind of living organism? I have been troubled by the suspicion that I had put myself into the position of supporting the concept of a *unitary organism*, a principle critiqued by Haraway (150), among others. We typically think of organisms, such as ourselves, as unitary beings bounded by skin or some bodily surface, but I want to get beyond that kind of thinking. Thus, I find Hayles's descriptions of the extended mind and embodiment far more compelling than the old, commonsense ontology.

It occurs to me that a hypertext is a *rhizome*; that is the kind of living organism it is. In a literal sense, a rhizome is a modified plant stem which grows horizontally under the

surface of the soil. New growth then emerges from different points of the rhizome. Irises and some lawn grasses are rhizomatous plants. However, I am more interested in the rhizome as an idea or philosophical principle. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's concept of the rhizome has been discussed by several hypertext theorists and authors (e.g., Carolyn Guyer, Shelley Jackson, Diane Greco, Stuart Moulthrop, Johndan Johnson-Eilola, George Landow, Michael Joyce, and Martin Rosenberg). As I discuss my relationship with these five hypertexts, I wish to foreground the concepts of rhizomorphic texts and rhizomatic reading. At a formal level, hypertexts have many characteristics that we could call rhizomorphic. "Perhaps one of the most important characteristics of the rhizome is that it always has multiple entryways [and exits . . .]. It has neither beginning nor end, but always a middle (*milieu*) from which it grows and overspills" (Deleuze and Guattari 12, 21). This sense of *always reading the middle* is what I wish to focus on.

In *A Thousand Plateaus* (1980, English translation 1987), a text that seems to have taken on near-scriptural status among many literary theorists, hypertext theorists and authors, feminists, social scientists, and philosophers, Deleuze and Guattari explain in a multitude of ways what they mean by the term *rhizome*:

> A rhizome as subterranean stem is absolutely different from roots and radicles. Bulbs and tubers are rhizomes. Plants with roots or radicles may be rhizomorphic in other respects altogether: the question is whether plant life in its specificity is not entirely rhizomatic. Even some animals are, in their pack form. Rats are rhizomes. Burrows are too, in all their functions of shelter, supply, movement,

evasion, breakout. The rhizome itself assumes very diverse forms, from ramified surface extension in all directions to concretization into bulbs and tubers. (6-7)

Jackson's Patchwork Girl gives an example of a rhizome in the lexia called "earwigs": "When I was 'young' [. . .] I turned over a leaf and found a massed and crawling nest of earwigs. I dropped the leaf and backed away from these creatures that appalled me singly not at all. What is dreadful about the plural? The swarm, the infestation." I have discussed in previous chapters the modernist propensity to measure all sorts of phenomena. The unbounded, immeasurable nature of the mass is threatening. Western empiricism has taught us not to trust or believe in anything that cannot be measured, such as mind or soul. And a common rhetorical tactic employed by demagogues is to characterize their enemies, or scapegoats, as a mass (e.g., a nest of vermin or the liberal media). Deleuze and Guattari go on to list a number of rhizomatic principles, such as

> Principles of connection and heterogeneity: any point of a rhizome can be connected to any other, and must be. [. . .] A rhizome ceaselessly establishes connections between semiotic chains, organizations of power, and circumstances relative to the arts, sciences, and social struggles. [. . .] Principle of multiplicity [. . .] There are no points or positions on a rhizome [. . .]. There are only lines. [. . .] the notion of unity appears only when there is a power takeover in the multiplicity [. . .] Principle of asignifying rupture [. . .]. A rhizome may be broken, shattered at a given spot, but it will start up again on one of its old lines, or on new lines. You can never get rid of ants because they form an animal rhizome that can rebound time and again after most of it has been destroyed. (7-9)

This last example describes the founding idea of the ARPANET, the ancestor of the Internet. In the early 1960s, Paul Baran developed the idea for a "distributed network," or a "network composed of many nodes, each redundantly connected to its neighbor" (Hafner and Lyon 58). The advantage of a distributed network is that it works around nodes that are down for service or congested with traffic. Baran also believed, rightly, that data traveling over a distributed network could be broken into "message blocks," or "packets," that would travel diverse routes from point A to point B; the data would be fractured at its point of origin and reassembled, or put back in linear order, at its destination (59-60). As the Internet and World Wide Web have developed, this non-centralized, rhizomorphic design has proven to be quite powerful.

Getting to Know the Text

If I am going to spend time with another person, I have to decide what do to—or rather, *we* have to decide together what we are going to do. So when beginning a relationship with a hypertext, I must confer with the text to decide what we want to do. And even after this initial consultation, there is a continual negotiation as I learn what the text will allow or what is worth doing with the text. As Moulthrop writes, "The text gestures toward openness—*what options can one imagine?*—but then swiftly forecloses: some options are available but not others, and someone clearly did the defining long before you began interacting" (2514). When I first meet a person, I may imagine that she or he will be open to anything I propose, but I soon remember that human beings are not blank slates for me to write on. I can write with others but not on them. Analogously, a

text may be unwilling to do what I want or hope to do. For instance, it may be unwilling or unable to participate in certain actions, such as opening up a new lexia when I press Enter, because its author has not provided a default link. In that case, when I press Enter the computer just emits an annoying beep. My response to this exigency is usually to click the back button. But I might also press F9 to search the alphabetic list of lexias (Figure 4.1). I can also try using the Navigate menu to do a full-text search (Figure 4.2) or look at a map or outline view of the text. In other words, there are a variety of options open to me when the text declines to follow a default path, as well as when I do not find the default path personally interesting or engaging.

Aside from using the text-search functions, there are two primary ways to read a Storyspace hypertext: One may press Enter or click the mouse inside a lexia, or one may select highlighted text links within a lexia. The first route tends to produce a more linear, or serial, reading—though certainly less linear than a conventional literary text; one can follow a particular narrative line for a number of lexias until in veers off into another narrative line. By contrast, selecting text links tends to produce a much more dispersed, sometimes incoherent reading. I, personally, find myself doing a little of both. I will press Enter or click the mouse to follow the default links for a while, but if a text link looks interesting I will click on that to see where it leads; however, I will often click the Back button to return to the previous path rather than follow a tangent indefinitely. I suppose I do not want to abruptly leave a narrative line that I've become invested in to read in a completely multilinear manner. On the other hand, if a particular narrative line does not

seem to be "going anywhere," I will click on a text link in search of something more interesting.

Another option I have with an electronic read-write interface is to annotate the text, or leave traces of my presence in the text. I have annotated these five texts and also added many text links, trying to construct a personally meaningful reading. My annotative traces are marked by the word "NOTE," usually appearing at the bottom of a lexia but sometimes at the top or in the middle as well (Figure 4.3). In the beginning I italicized these comments, but I discontinued this practice after encountering problems when trying to edit the italicized text. Later I began to bold face these notes. I have also nested lexias within the writing space labeled "Commentary" in each of the five texts. Thus, I have gone far beyond conventional annotation. For a closer reading than I present in this chapter, or to more closely study my personal engagement with the five texts, one may read the annotations and commentaries.

Annotation creates a dialogue between reader and text. Again, if I am in a relationship or am engaged in a conversation, it is quite natural to extend or elaborate on my interlocutor's statements. I can say, "Do you mean _____?" or "Oh, you mean _____." I then pause as the other person responds, telling me if I am reading her right. Pauses are obviously necessary in conversation, but there may also be occasions when I feel compelled to interrupt, for example, if my interlocutor is spouting ignorant, hateful, or nonsensical remarks. In advocating interruption as a tactic for women in the struggle for agency, Nedra Reynolds speaks of the need to interrupt normative discourses "by drawing attention to all forms of silencing" (64). Also, if a conversation just does not

seem to heading anywhere or the same ground is being needlessly covered over and over, we might interrupt to adjust the course of the conversation or turn it in a different direction.

Strategy, Tactics, and Timing

When it comes to interruptions or responses, timing is everything. In other words, interruptions are *kairotic*; the right time must be chosen. Although the spatial dimension is inevitably a factor as well, we often have little control over where we are situated spatially. A couple of examples of well timed interruptions are Rosa Parks' refusal to move to the back of the bus in Montgomery, Alabama in 1955 and Sojourner Truth's "Ain't I a Woman?" speech in Akron, Ohio in 1851. These interruptions were rhetorical acts that produced powerful historical discontinuities, redirecting traditional trajectories.

Following de Certeau, we may classify these interruptions as *tactics*, which are the counterpart of *strategies*. De Certeau argues that strategies privilege the spatial dimension and spatial relationships, inasmuch as they depend on an established "place of power," whereas tactics have more to do with time: "Strategies pin their hopes on the resistance that the establishment of a place offers to the erosion of time; tactics on the clever utilization of time, of the opportunities it presents and also of the play that it introduces in the foundations of power" (38-39). In the language of warfare and games, tactics are defined as operations within enemy or foreign territory. "The space of the tactic is the space of the other. Thus, it must play on and with a terrain imposed on it and organized by the law of a foreign power. [. . .] In short, a tactic is an art of the weak" (de Certeau

37). Furthermore, tactics are performed at close range. "It does not have the means to *keep to itself*, at a distance [. . .] It does not have [. . .] the options of planning a general strategy and viewing the adversary as a whole [. . .] It must operate in isolated actions, blow by blow" (37). Strategic space, by contrast, is an optic or even panoptic space. "It is [. . .] a mastery of places through sight. [. . .] To be able to see (far into the distance) is also to be able to predict, to run ahead of a time by reading a space" (36). So we are back to the feminist principle of acting *in* rather than acting *on*—i.e., living and working "up-close and personal" with the other, as oppose to controlling the other from a safe distance.

De Certeau emphasizes the temporal aspect of tactics because the spatial aspect, or where one happens to live or work, is often out of one's control. Shirley Wilson Logan took the title of one of her essays, "'When and Where I Enter': Race, Gender, and Composition Studies," from a statement by nineteenth-century educator Anna Julia Cooper, which expresses the concept of kairotic interruption quite well: "Only the Black woman can say 'when and where I enter, in the quiet, undisputed dignity of my womanhood, without violence and without suing or special patronage, there and then the whole Negro race enters with me" (qtd. in Logan 45). The *where* in this case is foreign territory, the space that women like Cooper and Logan, along with Rosa Parks, Sojourner Truth, and millions of *other others*, have been placed through no choice of their own.

Tactics are short-term operations; they take advantage of opportune moments (de Certeau 37-39). Reading is also short-term activity, as the reader attends to short strings of text, and the short-term quality of reading seems to be accentuated in hypertextual

environments because the reader sees only short sections of text. But even in reading conventional text, we often become distracted and "lose our place"; however, the fact is that "reading has no place" (174). The reader occupies the intertext, the interstices between texts, and this way she "escapes from the law of each text in particular" (de Certeau 174). De Certeau speaks of "reading as poaching":

> Far from being writers—founders of their own place, heirs of the peasants of earlier ages now working on the soil of language, diggers of wells and builders of houses—readers are travelers; they move across lands belonging to someone else, like nomads poaching their way across fields they did not write [. . .]. Writing accumulates, stocks up, resists time by the establishment of a place [. . .]. Reading takes no measure against the erosion of time (one forgets oneself and also forgets what he has read), it does not keep what it acquires, or does so poorly. (174)

Reading, then, involves a process of forgetting—i.e., as we progress through lines of text, we retain only a hazy memory of the words we have just read. If a reader were burdened with perfect memory of everything she or he had read, the reading process would quickly grind to a halt.

Strategy, or seeking to establish and maintain a place for oneself, is not necessarily a bad thing, as long as this place does not become a power base from which to oppress others. Strategic action seeks "first of all to distinguish its 'own' place, that is, the place of its own power and will, from an 'environment'" (37). De Certeau's argument, then, should not be taken as a glorification of weakness or marginalization. Moreover, writing oneself into a text is one means of establishing a personal space, and this act destabilizes

the passive consumerist position. De Certeau writes, "The child still scrawls and daubs on his schoolbooks; even if he is punished for this crime, he has made a space for himself and signs his existence as an author on it" (31). This child is overcoming readerly silence, just as one can do with an electronic read-write text interface such as Storyspace. By contrast, "The television viewer cannot write anything on the screen of his set. He has been dislodged from the product. [. . .] He loses his author's rights and becomes, or so it seems, a pure receiver" (de Certeau 31). Thus, through a circuitous route, I've returned to one of the central themes of this study, described variously as writing oneself into the text, overcoming reading silence, and wreating. While I do not wish to treat texts as enemy territory or uncritically adopt de Certeau's agonistic metaphors, there is nonetheless a sense in which the conventional text is *foreign* territory—i.e., territory owned and controlled by authors, publishers, and printers. But the electronic read-write interface fundamentally alters the textual playing field, allowing readers to not only make tactical moves, which is also possible in conventional text, but to strategically stake out and occupy their own territory within the text.

Interruptions, detours, spins, and spirals

Hypertextual reading paths are subject to perpetual interruption; this is the rule rather than the exception, and these interruptions may be visualized as narrative detours, spins, or spirals. Narrative lines spin off into other lines, and the multiple spinning and spiraling trajectories of a hypertext may be associated visually with a fractal (Figure 4.4), a product of chaos theory.

The logic of association has been an integral part of hypertext theory since the beginning (e.g., Bush, Nelson, Landow, Bolter). In associating hypertext with fractals and spirals, it might be preferable to use animated graphics, because these would allow me to convey the sense of dynamic space-time. However, since this dissertation in being written for print, I am left with still images. On the other hand, animated graphics could not represent hypertext any more successfully or accurately than still graphics—that is, animation does not come any closer to the "real thing." The experience of wreating hypertext cannot be represented, but I can associate this process with metaphors and images. Furthermore, the visual images I have chosen are as revealing for what they leave out, or for what is absent, as it is for what is present—and this is how association generally works; there is no one-to-one correspondence or identity between two entities. Once again, what we have is affinity rather than identity.

As I indicated above, a number of hypertext authors and theorists have drawn on the work of Deleuze and Guattari. In "Buzz-Daze and the Quotidian Stream," Guyer writes:

> [In] an essay called "The Smooth and the Striated" [. . .] Deleuze and Guattari [. . .] gave me something for which I had been looking almost fifteen years. [. . .] It has to do with [. . .] the non-existence of abstracted dualities. [. . .] Female/Male, Night/Day, Death/Life, Earth/Sky, Intuitive/Rational, Individual/Communal. [. . .] We make these things up! The terms "smooth" and "striated," [. . .] are an attempt to generalize the easy concept of polarity in order to make it useful in trying to understand what really happens, that is, the constant transformations of one pole

into the other. What is important to recognize is not the impossible duality of the poles, but what happens between them.[1]

Here we are presented with another approximation of the Möbius Strip, which features what Guyer calls "the constant transformations of one pole into the other." Furthermore, we can now see that de Certeau's tactical action disrupts and interrupts striated space; it creates a bit of smooth space. Disruption (literally, to break apart) is obviously very closely related to interruption (to break in), but interruption connotes *changing a discourse by entering into it*—perhaps writing or speaking oneself into a dominant discourse—as opposed to acting on something from a distance.

As Guyer's comments indicate, the principles of smooth space and striated space, which, along with the rhizome, are central to Deleuze and Guattari's thinking, do not constitute a simple binary. These "two spaces in fact exist only in mixture: smooth space is constantly being translated, transversed into striated space; striated space is constantly being reversed, returned to a smooth space. [. . .] But the de facto mixes do not preclude a de jure, or abstract, distinction between the two spaces" (Deleuze and Guattari 474-75). In other words, we can contrast and analyze smooth and striated spaces (i.e., place them in separate positions on a grid) while never losing sight of the fact that they cannot be separated from one another. One of many examples of smooth and striated spaces offered by Deleuze and Guattari is the distinction between woven fabric and felt:

> A fabric presents in principle a certain number of characteristics that permit us to define it as a striated space. First, it is constituted of two kinds of parallel

[1] Unpaginated online text.

elements; in the simplest case, there are vertical and horizontal elements, and the two intertwine, intersect perpendicularly. Second, the two kinds of elements have different functions; one is fixed, the other mobile, passing above and beneath the fixed. [. . .] Third, a striated space of this kind is necessarily delimited, closed in on at least one side [. . .]. Finally, a space of this kind seems necessarily to have a top and bottom. [. . .]

Felt [. . .] proceeds altogether differently, as an anti-fabric. It implies no separation of threads, no intertwining, only an entanglement of fibers [. . .] an aggregate of this kind is in no way homogenous: it is nevertheless smooth, and contrasts point by point with fabric. (475)

One variety of woven fabric is embroidery, and Deleuze and Guattari make a direct contrast between embroidery and patchwork—hence the relevance to this study. Embroidered fabrics feature fixed and mobile elements. According to Deleuze and Guattari,

[E]mbroidery's variables and constants, fixed and mobile elements, may be of extraordinarily complexity. Patchwork [. . .] may display equivalents to themes, symmetries, and resonance that approximate it to embroidery. But [. . .] its space is not at all constituted in the same way: there is no center; its basic motif ('block') is composed of a single element; the recurrence of this element frees uniquely rhythmic values distinct from the harmonies or embroidery (in particular, in 'crazy' patchwork, which fits together pieces of varying size, shape, and color, and plays on the *texture* of the fabrics). [. . .] An amorphous collection

of juxtaposed pieces that can be joined together in an infinite number of ways. (476)

In composing her hypertext, Jackson did well to draw from L. Frank Baum's *The Patchwork Girl of Oz* (1913), as well as Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein, or, The Modern Prometheus* (1818). These texts offered the raw material for a brilliant feminist articulation of hypertext.

The Patchwork Cyborg

The complete title of Jackson's work is *Patchwork Girl; or A Modern Monster, by Mary/Shelley, and Herself.* The hypertext is divided into five sections, which are presented as a subtitle: *a graveyard, a journal, a quilt, a story & broken accents.* The *graveyard* section describes the composition of the Patchwork Girl's body; *a journal* is written by (Jackson's) Mary Shelley and recounts the creation and early life of the Patchwork Girl; *a quilt* is a skillfully constructed patchwork from a number of texts (e.g., *Frankenstein*, *The Patchwork Girl of Oz*, Derrida's *Disseminations*, Cixous' "Coming to Writing," Deleuze and Guattari's *A Thousand Plateaus*, Haraway's "A Cyborg Manifesto," and Lyotard's *The Postmodern Condition*) with different fonts being used to denote different source texts; a *story*, written in the Patchwork Girl's voice, narrates her life and travels from Europe to California over a period of some 175 years; *broken accents* seems to written in the voice of an author who travels, like the Patchwork Girl, over Europe and the United States, with a laptop computer in tow; this writer is

impossible to "nail down" due to her fluid, highly mobile identity. For instance, she writes,

> I am not predictable, but neither am I random. I might very well be in the cafe predicted, and am—sitting in white light, espresso souring my mouth, jazz piano tinkling over a slurred bass line, as I read fragments of flyers taped to the walls—but could equally be anywhere else, so if you think you're going to follow me, you'll have to learn to move the way I do, think the way I think; there's just no way around it. (think me)[2]

This writer of *broken accents* lives for "the sheer pleasure of movement" (flow). In other words, she inhabits a smooth, nomadic space.

A further contrast between smooth and striated space is that smooth spaces are experienced at close range, whereas one navigates striated space primarily by means of long-distance vision. I have argued previously that feminists tend to valorize relationships that are up-close and personal, or relationships in which the other is not kept at a distance. Thus, we return to the discussion of the tactile epistemic and the visual epistemic, though with a slight revision. Deleuze and Guattari use the term *haptic*, which *Webster's* defines as "related to or based on the sense of touch," to describe smooth space; yet by haptic Deleuze and Guattari mean more than merely the sense of touch or a simple opposition between vision and touch. In discussing the aesthetics of smooth spaces, Deleuze and Guattari list two closely related characteristics:

[2] I have opted to cite Storyspace lexias as in-text citations without quotation marks because I found that the quotation marks create a cluttered text.

> First, 'close range' vision, as distinguished from long-distance vision; second, 'tactile,' or rather 'haptic' space, as distinguished from optical space. [. . .] [T]he Smooth is both the object of close vision par excellence and the element of a haptic space (which may be as much visual as auditory as tactile). The Striated, on the contrary, relates more to distant vision, and a more optical space—although the eye in turn is not the only organ to have this capacity. (492-93)

The concept of haptic space allows me to complicate and extend the analysis of what I have previously called the tactile epistemic. For instance, we might speak of sound waves *touching* auditory nerves and light touching optic nerves, and this touching happens at close range in smooth space. From distances we do not have the same sense of being directly touched by visual or auditory stimuli.

Greco quotes Deleuze and Guattari several times and mentions them by name in four lexias. In a lexia labeled "rhizome," Greco, writes:

> A rhizome: disconnected, in motion, heterogeneous, yet at every point potentially connected to every other; not only that, but multiple, and a principle of "asignifying" rupture; just as when you try to divide a bunch of ants and find that they continue to agglomerate, even as you try to separate them—this mobile, continued resistance to separation or definition is a rhizomatic phenomenon.

The cyborg, as Greco's hypertext demonstrates, is a kind of rhizome; it can mend its body with new parts, just like the ant hill that always comes back together after being separated. The amorphous, acentered character of the ant hill is perhaps its greatest strength. Similarly, the cyborg has no center because, through the extended mind, its

parts are dispersed throughout its environment. The cyborg is a pattern rather than a presence. Hayles writes, "The contrast between the body's limitations and cyberspace's power highlights the advantages of pattern over presence. As long the pattern endures, one has attained a kind of immortality" ("VB" 81).

In the Introduction to *Cyborg: Engineering the Body Electric*, Greco writes, "This hypertext examines representations of the body in cyberpunk science fiction, in order to explore how fictional appropriations and reworkings of technology de-stabilize traditional notions of gender and identity" (why this project). We can see that Greco, like Jackson, is very concerned with the body. Greco goes on to write, "This potent combination of science fiction and technological fact in cyberpunk sf offers an escape from the physical body. It also comments on the boundaries of that body, as well as on the social reality that defines it. The body is, among other things, a social question" (potent). The body, for Greco and Jackson, is essentially a rhizome. But Greco differs from Jackson in focusing on the technological environment of cyberpunk fiction, as opposed to nineteenth-century Europe or twentieth-century America. Greco writes,

> The cyberpunk territory is a radically concrete landscape of the mind. Many of the narratives I explore in this hypertext involve journeys in which characters travel within a space that exists only within the domain of cyberspace — a technological construct that exists only as an extension of the computer user into a consensual realm of interaction with other users in other places, all linked together by a system of rapid-fire information transfer. (territory)

On the other hand, Greco and Jackson are linked by their explorations of textual spaces, inasmuch as the characters inhabiting cyberpunk fiction and the Patchwork Girl, along with Jackson's Mary Shelley and her other characters and personae, are texts. And if we consider the principle of intertextuality, the textual universe is a rhizome.

The Patchwork Girl is a rhizome as well as a cyborg; her body is also, for the most part, a smooth space, inasmuch as rhizomorphic space is smooth space. Echoing Deleuze and Guattari, she calls herself a "swarm": "I am made up of a multiplicity of anonymous particles, and have no absolute boundaries. I am a swarm" (self-swarm). As a swarm, the Patchwork Girl resembles the earwigs mentioned previously. However, all smooth spaces have some degree of striation, and the Patchwork Girl's scars are striations. We learn that "long cords of curdled, whitened tissue divided her torso into sectors as distinct as patches in a quilt" (I moved). Jackson's Mary Shelley goes to write in her journal, "I ran my fingertips along a seam that traversed her flank. It was tough and knobbled, yet slick. And it was hot [. . .] it was hotter than the stretches of smooth skin it divided, as I proved by caressing both regions" (fingertips).[3] The scars hold the smooth space of the patchwork together. Without the seams, her body would fly apart—as indeed it does late in her autobiographical narrative.

The Patchwork Girl acknowledges that to the casual observer she might appear to be mere "scraps," as she states, "'Scraps? Did you call me Scraps? Is that my name?'" (swarm). But this judgment need not have a negative connotation. As Deleuze and

[3] In *Laws of Media*, Marshall McLuhan referred to print as interactively "hot" and electronic media as interactively "cool." See Moulthrop's "You Say You Want a Revolution?: Hypertext and the Laws of Media" (2519).

Guattari write, in America, "toward the end of the [nineteenth] century patchwork technique was developed more and more, at first due to the scarcity of textiles (leftover fabric pieces salvaged from used clothes, remnants taken from the 'scrap bag'). [. . .] It is as though a smooth space emanated, sprang from a striated space" (477). The scars, in other words, emanate from the Patchwork Girl's smooth bodily space.

Greco mentions another of Deleuze and Guattari's concepts: the Body without Organs: "Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari want to posit a Body without Organs: that is, a physical body toward which its owner takes a certain attitude that is rhizomatic. The body in this sense is a smooth expanse of pure desire" (body without organs). The body without organs (sometimes capitalized, sometimes not) ultimately reveals itself as "connection of desires, conjunction of flows, continuum of intensities. [. . .] [I]t is that which desires and by which one desires" (Deleuze and Guattari 161, 165). The body without organs, or BwO, is the dialectical counterpart of the *organism*, which is the *organization of the organs*. The BwO is not the opposite of the organs. "The organs are not its enemies. The enemy is the organism. The BwO is opposed not to the organs but to the organization of the organs called the organism" (158). The organism is the source of the subject; it says, "You will be a subject, nailed down as one" (159). The BwO animates the nomad (and/or nomadic space), and nomads cannot be nailed down. Furthermore, inasmuch as the BwO is "pure," it is unattainable. "You never reach the Body without Organs, you can't reach it, you are forever attaining, it is a limit" (Deleuze and Guattari 150). The BwO strives to dismantle the organization of the organs; however,

the BwO must not be allowed to completely dismantle the organism because this ends in suicide or insanity as the strata of the organism collapse in upon themselves (161).

We can now understand de Certeau's analysis of strategies and tactics with reference to the body without organs. The BwO uses tactics in the enemy territory of the organism, and it must consider kairos, or good timing, as it destratifies the organism. The organism cannot be dismantled at all once or clumsily. "You have to diminish it, shrink it, clean it, and that only at certain moments" (162). If the organism is dismantled clumsily, it quickly rebuilds itself, or restratifies, and reasserts its authority (Deleuze and Guattari 163-64). We see in *Patchwork Girl*, towards the "end" of the autobiographical narrative (*a story*), the dismantling or the organism, but the Patchwork Girl, as a true cyborg, reassembles her organism by splicing in new organs. Hence, as I stated early in this chapter, I do not wish to argue that a hypertext is a unitary organism; it is rather an organism in flux, or rhizome, which is produced by the dynamic interaction of the organism and the body without organs.

The body without organs relates to the issue of representationalism as well. "The BwO is precisely this intense germen where there are not and cannot be either parents or children (organic representation)" (164). Hence, the BwO is responsible for creatures such the "illegitimate" cyborg and the Patchwork Girl—that "hideous progeny" (hideous progeny). The crucial point that I want to make is that the logic of representation, or representationalism, privileges the object being represented over the representation—that is, one object is primary and the other secondary, or derivative. This binary, reductive logic takes us back to the Platonic formulation of mimesis, in which tangible, visible

reality is an imperfect copy, or analogue, of the transcendent Ideal. Representation means reproduction. The logic of association, by contrast, does not privilege one entity over another; nor is it binaristic; therefore, when I associate a hypertext with a fractal or a spiral neither the hypertext nor the visual image is primary. Deleuze and Guattari assert that "Mimicry is a very bad concept, since it relies on binary logic to describe phenomena of an entirely different nature. [. . .] Unlike the tree, the rhizome is not the object of reproduction" (11). Hypertext and the fractal are of entirely different natures, yet they are associable.

Cyborgs do not reproduce; they don't need to. As Greco notes, in cyberpunk fiction, "technological-biological upgrades and replication replace reproduction" (appended), and in this discussion of hypertext I am not driven by mimetic logic. The cyborg is not a copy of a prototype or original; it is not a representation. The cyborg follows the logic of association, or patchwork logic, rather than representation or mimesis. Hence, the Patchwork Girl does not resemble her maker. In her journal, Jackson's Mary Shelley writes, "For despite the cold, she will not keep her clothes for long; romping like a hoydenish child of overgrown proportions she tears the confining garments from her form, baring her scarred and rag-tag flesh. [. . .] She does not resemble me. But then I begin to wonder if I still resemble myself" (appetite). The Patchwork Girl is a cyborg because her body is stitched together with needle and thread, or, in an alternate narrative path, she is created with pen, ink, and paper. The seams, however, quickly cover with scar tissue as she incorporates the (narrative) threads into herself.

Reproduction is an important theme in this discussion because the cyborg is not a reproduction and it does not reproduce. It assembles parts; it is an "assemblage," like Deleuze and Guattari's *A Thousand Plateaus* (4). A rhizome spreads out laterally, as opposed to plunging deep into the earth in search of sources, originals, or prototypes. In other words, the movement or growth of the rhizome is paratactic rather than hypotactic. Paratactic texts are written by stitching or patching together multiple texts. Parataxis, then, is patchwork.

Aside from the matter of visual representation, what one writes when augmenting or supplementing a hypertext (e.g., notes, annotations, journalistic reflections, tentative suppositions or working theories), should not be merely *derivative* of the other text (i.e., the copyrighted text); it is immediately integrated into the text and subtly changes the text. Thus, the primary/secondary text binary breaks down. The only criterion that matters is that the reader's text be *associable* with the other text, even if the only reader to make the associations is the writer of that text. The writer, then, may be her/his only audience. And while the marginalia written in a conventional print text shares some of these traits, with an electronic read-write interface the supplementary text is immediately absorbed into the script. As I argued previously, the hypertext script may be written in, while the script of the conventional text may only be written on.

Associational logic allows us to go beyond mere explanation, because explanation is tied to representation. When relying on representation, we must find or construct the most accurate copies or closest analogues of whatever it is we wish to represent and explain.

But if we use associative logic, we are much freer to choose images, metaphors, or experiences that are comparable in some way, or that have some affinity, with what we are seeking to *understand*, rather than explain. Moreover, if I associate hypertext with a fractal image, it gives me a new perspective on, or appreciation of, fractals as well as hypertext. I do not simply use the fractal, in a parasitic fashion, as a means to better explain hypertext; the illumination is reciprocal. Association works both ways; it is not unidirectional.

While reading *Quibbling*, I learned that the image of the curve is very productive metaphorically and metonymically. In an archetypical sense, the curve is culturally coded as feminine, and this principle has been reflected for centuries in artistic representations of the curves of the female nude. However, in the Western tradition most publicly acclaimed or remembered artists have been male, and the association of curves with the female body may simply be a product Western androcentricism. In other words, the curve, like woman, is categorized as other. The straight line is the default, and straight is synonymous with honest, frank, upright, undiluted, and so on. Heterosexuals are classified as *straight*, that is, normal. Crooked, of course, means dishonest. Other synonyms for crooked that I find in my thesaurus are *warped*, *twisted*, and *bent*. Even the word *spin* has, over the last decade or so, taken on a new, pejorative meaning—i.e., not telling the actual truth or not being *straight* with the public.

I would like to reverse this negative connotation and talk about *narrative spin* as a positive, innovative feature of literary hypertext. One definition of spin is "to draw out and twist fiber into yarn or thread." Storytellers spin yarns and narrative threads.

Moreover, the ancient Greek rhapsodes were, literally, spinners, and their narratives varied with audience and situation. In other words, rhapsodic tales were kairotic. The difference between traditional storytelling and hypertext is that hypertext writers and readers turn narrative threads into felt, one of Deleuze and Guattari's examples of smooth space. Felt "is in principle infinite, open, and unlimited in every direction; it has neither top nor bottom nor center; it does not assign fixed and mobile elements but rather distributes a continuous variation" (Deleuze and Guattari 475-76). The nodes and links of hypertext do not have a fixed-mobile relation to each other. Both are potentially mobile. The process of reading conventional text, on the other hand, does have fixed and mobile elements: The script remains fixed from beginning to end while the reader's eyes move over the script. But with hypertext, the script, being divided into lexias, shifts its arrangement throughout the reading process.

In *Patchwork Girl*, Jackson writes of "[f]allen angels [. . .] twisting their bodies into unnatural shapes, cleaving in unholy unwholly marriages to animals, fish, birds, insects, mollusks, arachnids and others both for politics and for pleasure" (bad dreams). She goes on to describe fallen monsters who move "chaotically, in fractals, through spirals, percentages and hairpin turns, 'one step forward two steps back,' hopscotch, hokey-pokey, double dutch, bass-ackwards, ride-a-cock-horse" (bad dreams). *Quibbling* contains a reference to Heta's "spiraling cunt" (bmk/beam of flesh). Elsewhere, Bridget, Heta's grown daughter, states, "Did you know, Mom, that it was once believed that people were born from a woman's intestines (the clear distinction between reproductive and digestive systems not yet made)? That labyrinths, and snakes, and spirals, and coils

were symbols of femininity, the mother, operating principle of the world?" (and blood). Heta is also associated with the waves that wash onto the shore of Lake Michigan, where she lives, and waves are curved: "For a long time Heta watched the cadence of Lake Michigan. She watched the waves glide in to shore on calm sunny days, waves with delicate ruffs of foam slinging to nets of crochet fanned out over the sand. She watched on windy days when the cold slapped her face and frisked her body, sky lowering and surf tearing furiously at the land" (water color). Elsewhere we read of Heta and Priam walking alongside a river: "Arms hung loosely at each other's waist, Heta's lowering occasionally to palm a moving buttock, they spoke quietly, but mostly not at all, simply enjoying the early fall warmth and the swirl and wave of her long black skirt as they walked" (recognition). Hilda's skirt waves in a very similar fashion. Excluding my commentary, the word *wave* is mentioned in ten of *Quibbling's* lexias. Heta is a mother, and we learn that the "Mother-letter M (Ma) was an ideogram for waves of water" (wa-wa). A hypertext may be considered feminine, or associated with archetypal femininity, insofar as it curves back on itself, or is recursive. Guyer speaks of how at a certain "depth, fictional warp begins to turn back on itself, the curve we're always looking for (more Help). The Möbius strip is similar, though not identical, to a spiral. Curves constitute haptic space. That is, curves are best perceived through touch. Even the curves of sound waves touch the ear drum. Merely seeing a curve, especially from a distance, cannot account for its richness. Thus, as I've noted before, Irigaray claims that women know best by touch; they know up-close, in haptic space.

Once I noticed the prominence of the curve motif in *Quibbling*, I started to link together most of the references to curves in this hypertext. (To find all of the lexias containing the word *curve*, either press Control-F and enter *curve* or use the navigate menu and select *find text*.) By making multiple links from my comment on curves,[4] I have created a nodal point in the hypertext—a concept not to be confused with the single *focal* point of the conventional narrative. From this nodal point radiate, like spokes of a wheel, links to many of the lexias that contain a reference to curves. Recursive reading means turning back to such nodal points. However, one may also follow the curve text links (i.e., "curve" as highlighted text within a lexia), never returning to the "curves" lexia I have added. I have followed the same procedure to link lexias containing a particular word in other hypertexts as well. For example, in Greco's *Cyborg* thirty-five lexias contain the word *power*, a number of which I have tied together through text links.

Hypertextual nodal points are *turning points*, or what Harpold calls digressions and points of detour, which we might also call contours. Thus, by creating nodal points, which have links leading away and returning, I am adding new contours to the text. Harpold speaks of a "dynamic interlacing of the [narrative] threads, each looping around the other at a central point of detour" ("Threnody" 177). We might visualize nodal points as recursive plateaus. Deleuze and Guattari "call a 'plateau' any multiplicity connected to other multiplicities by superficial underground stems is such a way as to form or extend a rhizome. We are writing this book as a rhizome. It is composed of plateaus" (22). As I discuss further below, in reading hypertext one reads for plateaus rather than a single

[4] The comment referred to here is located in the lexia labeled "curves."

narrative climax. While a linear text marches inexorably forward toward closure and death, recursive reading escapes narrative death. Thus, multiple plateaus are an alternative to the normative death-closure-ejaculation.

A spiral may be formed by circling round and round nodal points, and as such the spiral may be associated with the wandering/wondering, nomadic text. In smooth, nomadic space, "movement is not from point to another, but become perpetual, without aim or destination, without departure or arrival" (Deleuze and Guattari 353). The spiral is made of cycles within cycles, which is analogous to the recursive hypertext wreating experience. The spiral has fascinated humankind for millennia. According to the *Ancient Spiral* website,

> Some of the oldest examples of human art are depictions of spirals, painted or carved into rock, often found in burial sites. Later, the Romans and Greeks used spirals as designs for vases and the columns in temples. The Celtic and Norse people were well known for the mysterious and repetitive designs found on their jewelry, clothing, weapons, objects of worship and everyday items. The Celts even painted spirals on their bodies with blue dye to intimidate enemies during battle. They also created forms of animals and plants twisting into impossible spirals, sometimes interlocking with other elements of the picture.

I have referenced the above quotation because Hilda, one of the characters in *Quibbling*, seems to be a pagan, judging by the fact that she does a spiral dance:

> At the top of this small hill, where it levels out into a large, square pad of asphalt, she performs her most personal and public ritual. It is one she has performed every day for some time now, always thinking that someone will eventually notice.
>
> As she walks across the square of asphalt, she makes a complete turn, never stopping, to check all 360 degrees of the sky. Her chin, arms, and skirt lift slightly as she turns, while her footsteps, moving forward and in a circle, trace a spiral on the earth. (spiral)

New spirals, curves, contours, and plateaus may easily be added to a hypertext. By adding new links within a hypertext, as I have done with the word "curve" in *Quibbling*, I am able to create new contiguities in the text—that is, I can bring two lexias closer and alter the narrative trajectory. Deleuze and Guattari claim that smooth space features curvilinear trajectories (361). They speak of "Archimedean geometry, in which the straight line, defined as 'the shortest distance between two points,' is just a way of defining the length of a curve in a predifferential calculus" (361). In connection with the theme of the spiral, it is noteworthy that Deleuze and Guattari go on to speak of going from "a curvilinear declination to the formation of spirals and vortices on an inclined plane: the greatest slope for the smallest angle" (361). While I do not presume to understand the mathematics, it is clear that curves, spins, and spirals are defining features of smooth, haptic, nomadic space-time.

Quibbling is a nomadic narrative; it does not have an Aristotelian plot (Landow 208). Given that the Aristotelian plot was fashioned after drama (e.g., Sophocles,

Aristophanes), it is far different than the novelist structure as it was developed centuries later. A novel may have many plots—not merely a main plot and subplots, which is hierarchical, but *parallel* plots. The map view of *Quibbling* shows that this hypertext is organized in three sections: lake, moon, and prairie—each of which has associations with Western notions of "the feminine." These three topoi serve as pivot points for the wandering text (Figure 4.5).

The reader wanders (and wonders) through *Quibbling*, somewhat like the characters, such as Heta and Priam, both of whom live somewhat nomadic lives, taking temporary teaching positions. Given the time and space constraints of classical drams, the Aristotelian plot cannot afford to wander like a novel, but a hypertext can wander/wonder far more than a conventional novel. Thus, literary hypertext is more nomadic than the novel, and the novel is more nomadic than the classical dramatic plot. Deleuze and Guattari refer to the nomadic text as "a flow of children; a flow of walking with pauses, straggling, and forward rushes" (23). In other words, the flow of the text is discontinuous; it features conversational pauses.

Lust and Promiscuous Wreating; or The Logic of the Hyphen

I move now to a discussion of "Lust," a short but difficult literary hypertext. In trying to make sense of a hypertext like "Lust," the first thing to recognize is that these texts cannot be read, they can only reread.[5] "Lust," being comprised of thirty-seven lexias, is a kind of poem, but the reader's purpose is not to explicate it—not explain it or

represent it, but to re/read it, and perhaps to rewrite it (Press F9 to see an alphabetic list of the lexias.). The "rhythm of recurrence" (Joyce, *Othermindedness* 120) is, in large part, what literary hypertext is all about.

"Indulgence," a typical lexia in "Lust," reads as follows: "She aches from the gravel against her soft flesh. There is blood. She is nearly naked. She falls to her knees. She screams. She picks up the knife. There is blood. He does not speak." How does one re/read something like this? When I started re/reading "Lust" it made no sense. *Patchwork Girl*, on the other hand, was quite clear to me; I immediately grasped the idea that the Patchwork Girl was a hypertextual creature. The main problem with "Lust" is that I had and still have great difficulty figuring out who "she," "he," and "the child" are. In other words, it is difficult to separate, positioning, or assign the characters to their "proper" sectors on a narrative grid. It is difficult to superpose striations on this smooth text. From the re/reader's perspective, there appear to be four characters in "Lust": an unnamed woman, John, Jeffrey, and a child. John and Jeffrey are referred to by name in one lexia each. The lexia labeled "John" states, "John had sand colored hair and eyes of sea. He drove a motorcycle, never wore a helmet. 'I am a dyed-in-the-wool Republican,' he said." The lexia "She and the Child" contains the text, "Dyed in the woolen blanket. Fraying ends. Fibers. Sand, gravel against soft flesh." Leitmotifs, such as the woolen blanket and fraying fibers, recur throughout the text, taking on many associations. The associations become entangled like the threads of felt.

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[5] Intermittently, I will use the term *re/read* to convey the sense that reading is essentially rereading when it comes to literary hypertext.

As I re/read "Lust," I began to wonder if the child was an aspect of the woman and/or one of the men. For instance, the lexia "she aches," reads, "She aches. She longs to sit. She sits, thighs naked, tugging at her shirt." And the lexia "Wishing" reads, "She wishes like a child that he had followed her and stayed that night. [. . .] The child aches. The child comes to her, nearly naked." From these lexias, I sense that the child is an aspect of the woman and/or one of the men. The pronoun references are thoroughly ambiguous, as in the following excerpt: "The child aches. The child comes to her, nearly naked. She speaks slowly, deliberately" (Wishing). Who is "she" in the foregoing text, the child or the woman or both? We are never told the child's gender. Other lexias indicate that the child is an aspect of one of the men. Another lexia reads, in part, "He speaks to her, asks her to follow him, to stay with him. Here he is like a child, slowly, deliberately" (Summer). The lexia "Aching" also tells us, "He speaks to her as a child, slowly, deliberately."

It was only after re/reading or making many passes over the text that I formed the hypothesis that one or more of the adult characters might also be the baby. This hypothesis is supported by the juxtaposition of two excerpts: "Jeffrey had a past. He wrapped it around him like a blanket to keep him warm" (Jeffrey) and "The child is nearly naked, wrapped in a woolen blanket, toes flexing" (The Child Speaks). The hypothesis that Jeffrey is also the child may now become a working theory. This is what we do with hypertext: we form a hypothesis, test the hypothesis by re/reading, modify the hypothesis as needed, and finally settle on a working theory (Douglas, "Understanding" 122-25). Of course, we do the same when reading conventional literature. We make

educated guesses about what is to follow, test those guesses by re/reading on, modify the guesses, and finally settle on an explanation that makes sense to us. A difficult hypertext, such as "Lust," simply makes this process more conscious or deliberate, as well much more recursive.

I have re/read these five hypertexts, looking for patterns, recurrent themes, and similitudes, in this way constructing plateaus. In *Quibbling*, the fact that nearly all the characters are in some way artists links them together. Also, the mother-child relationship is another recurrent theme in *Quibblin*g. Mothers create, and artists create. Of course, mothers create *with* fathers, and the female-male relationship is central to this text, as most of the characters are romantically paired, although not all of the pairings are heterosexual. In this sense, *Quibbling* resembles, in Jackson's words, a "patchwork quilt, a fabric of relations" (*PG*, research).

One way of re/reading a Storyspace hyperfiction is to do a full-text search for a character's name and simply re/read every lexia in which she or he is mentioned. *Quibbling's* cast of characters, which I compiled as I re/read the text, is listed in Figure 4.6a. A few of my identifications are still tentative. The fact that in the listing of characters I have skipped lines between couples indicates that I am trying to separate and position the characters, or tease out the threads of felt. And because this list amounts to a positioning of the characters, I have also laid the characters out spatially, linking characters according to their associations (Figure 4.6b). The reader, especially early in the reading, often does not know who is being described because the characters' lives are so similar. Again, the central motif is affinity, not identity. As Landow has observed, in

Quibbling "one perceives somewhat analogous situations, thus finding similarity, though not identity, in the lives of the different couples" (207). In terms of a re/reading strategy, if we cannot distinguish between speakers, we may fall back on exploring similitudes. Similitude creates a different sense of arrangement—an arrangement common in the pre-print, pre-modern era. Hence, the rhetorical canon of arrangement mutates with technological developments; it is *remediated* (Bolter and Grusin 45). Rhodes and Sawday write, "The early modern version of field theory and chaos theory is Montaigne's observation that '*toutes choses se tiennent par quelque similitude*' (similitude binds everything together) . . . The paperworlds of the poets . . . derive imaginatively from a concept of the book of nature as a giant intertext of multiple connections and allusions" (13). In a literary hypertext we re/read for similitude rather than linear coherence or cause-and-effect structures, narrative or otherwise.

We might compare the notion of giant intertext to statement by Deleuze and Guattari: "The ideal for a book would be to lay everything out on a plane of exteriority [. . .] on a single page" (9). Books do not remain within themselves as autonomous, Enlightenment subjects; they form rhizomatic linkages exteriorly. In the image of the plane of exteriority, we have a radically different sense of arrangement than ideals of internal consistency and completeness against which conventional texts are measured. "All multiplicities are flat" (Deleuze and Guattari 9). Hence, on the textual plane, the "single page" where these five hypertexts are spread out, I have constructed plateaus at the points where themes, images, and ideas intersect or may be associated.

Returning now to "Lust," one prominent theme in this text is the emotional oscillation between past and future, or more specifically patterns of remembering and expecting-wishing-longing. The experience of looking forward and back at once, the Janus-faced experience[6], is central to "Lust," and the word *remember* appears in fourteen of the thirty-seven lexias. We rarely encounter the present in this hypertext, except as the backdrop for remembering or wishing. For example, the lexia "She Expects" tells us, "She remembers cold. She remembers traces of sweat, salty, windy. She expects him to come, nearly naked." An excerpt from "Try" reads, "She remembers him walking out of the room. She remembers following him. That night, she follows him. She remembers wishing he had stayed." In the two words "remembers wishing" we have the Janus-faced experience.

One important object-sign in "Lust" is a blanket. By linking lexias together and rereading, I formed the working theory that remembering is associated with the blanket; that is, the frayed blanket is associable, though it may not *represent*, fraying memories. The blanket of memory is a text/ile, and the fraying signifies forgetting. We read of "blankets of words, the fibers fraying" (Summer). We also learn that "Jeffrey had a past. He wrapped it around him like a blanket to keep him warm, to keep him safe from harm" (Jeffrey). The past is held in memory, and it may keep us warm and comfort us.

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[6] "January 1st was dedicated by the Romans to their God of Gates and Doors, Janus. A very old Italian God, Janus has a distinctive artistic appearance in that he is commonly depicted with two faces...one regarding what is behind and the other looking toward what lies ahead. Thus, Janus is representative of contemplation on the happenings of an old year while looking forward to the new. Some sources claim that Janus was characterized in such a peculiar fashion due to the notion that doors and gates look in two directions. Therefore, the God could look both backward and forward at the same time." (http://www.novareinna.com/festive/janus.html)

However, Jeffrey's blanket is described, not as warm, but as cold steel: "The blanket of steel, less penetrable than the surface of his skin" (Jeffrey). The blanket, in turn, is also associable with the cold steel knife, as in, "She picks up the knife, thinks of his face, runs the smooth cold blade across the surface of her skin" (Knife). Continuing this associative chain, the knife/blanket is associable with the child, as indicated by the juxtaposition of "She picks up the knife" (Knife) and "The child does not speak. The child picks up the knife" (Touching). The proximity of the child and the knife, along with fact that young children are typically picked up by adults, suggests a blurring of the identity of child and knife. Although there is no mention of actually picking up the child, we are told elsewhere that "she carries the child" (Nearly Naked), and this doesn't appear to mean the woman is pregnant. In short, if she carries the child in her arms, she obviously picks him or her up first. Moreover, I wonder if it is the *child in the woman*, her inner child, as it were, who picks up the knife—that is, does the woman pick herself up? We also learn that "He is smooth and cold" (The Child). Is this "he" the child, John, Jeffrey, the knife, or all of the above? Rather than an either/or logic, we seem to have the *logic of the hyphen*, from which we get terms such as John-Jeffrey-she-the child-the knife. The narrative lines of "Lust" resemble the interlocking, tangled threads of felt. The identities of the four characters are felt-like. "Felt is a supple solid [. . .] It implies no separation of threads, no intertwining, only an entanglement of fibers [. . .] What becomes entangled are the microscales of the fibers" (Deleuze and Guattari 475). The network of memory also resembles felt.

Memories, the Cyborg, and Saying Nothing

Memory, or more specifically bodily or visceral memory, is a theme in *Cyborg* as well. In the lexia labeled "meat," Greco writes:

> The cyberpunk disposability of the body as 'meat'—if you lose yours, you can always get a new one—creates a social context in which the exploitation of these bodies carries no particular moral or ethical weight. It could be argued that prostitution, for example, no longer degrades the prostitute, or at least not in quite the same way. The technology separates her mind from her body so entirely that she may have no recollection of the event at all. [. . .] If you can't remember something, how do you know it really happened, especially when the only other witness has a very real interest in maintaining his silence, and your own?

Cyberpunk fiction[7] raises the question of where memories reside, where they are located in a spatial or spatiotemporal sense. The disconnection of mind from body, or more accurately the altered sense of embodiment, experienced as one jacks into the matrix implies the absence or erasure of bodily memory—or meat memory. A portion of my memory might reside on my computer's hard disk, or in a notebook on my bedside table, or on a note stuck to my refrigerator. Is memory stored externally any less mine than the memory stored in my brain cells? Not all memory is meat memory. Recalling "Lust," Greco writes elsewhere of both remembering and wishing: "Memory, like a still photograph, preserves the past in sets of timeless moments; similarly for history, for we

can always go back and re-read, re-call, re-visit, remember. This power over time is essentially and necessarily fantastic and imaginative; it recalls a time when the world was ours for wishing" (oh, chronos). To assert power over time is to *spatialize time* or to privilege the spatial over the temporal, which is referred to by de Certeau as the "triumph of space over time" (36). Thus, we can that say that memory works by spatializing the temporal flow of experience, assigning experiences and events to specific, separate *loci* on a grid. Temporal events can be *placed* within the frame of a photograph or painting, Deleuze and Guattari's optical space, and held there as long as the medium endures.

Photography or, more specifically, film is an important theme in "I Have Said Nothing." Particular events are very often associated with remembered scenes from films, television shows, commercials, and even cartoons. For example, at one point Luke, a principle character, "watches the car snake off down Sunset through the bathroom screen, and it seems to him later that the car spent an incredibly long time receding. A little like that steady zoom that closes on William Holden in *The Wild Bunch*, so that he appears to be growing closer even as he's riding away, his silhouette fading into the distance" (Cooked Goose). Luke and the other characters in this hypertext live in a "hyperreality" where every experience is immediately absorbed into the world of simulation. Jean Baudrillard speaks of "the collapse of reality into hyperrealism, the meticulous reduplication of the real, preferably through another reproductive medium" (454). In hyperrealism there is no longer a binary opposition between the real and the imaginary (454). We might say that the real is caught in an endless feedback look with its

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[7] Cyberpunk, a science fiction genre made famous by William Gibson's 1984 novel, *Neuromancer*, features

simulation. The hyperreal is "*that which is always already reproduced*" (Baudrillard 456). Yet, to get away from the idea of reproducing, representing, or counterfeiting an original, which is not what Baudrillard means by simulation, we might substitute the word *replicate* for reproduce. Digital technology, which is associated with hyperreality, is founded on exact replication rather than reproduction in the traditional sense of that term. Replication is neither reproduction nor representation. "The hyperreal is beyond representation [. . .] only because it is entirely within simulation" (Baudrillard 456).

"I Have Said Nothing," which with ninety-five lexias is longer than "Lust," features two death scenes, separated by eight years and approximately 1800 miles: Sherry, identified as Luke's girlfriend, is hit by a car when, in an intoxicated state, she steps into a busy Detroit street. Eight years later, Juliet, usually referred to as Jules, is killed, along with her sister Aleis, in an auto accident in southern California. Luke is present at neither scene. The unnamed narrator is Luke's brother (The narrator's gender is not given, but his language suggests that he is male—e.g., he calls Sherry "my brother Luke's piece."). Three other characters in the narrative are Laura, a friend of Sherry, and Jake and Clare, the parents of Jules and Aleis (Figure 4.7). Jake and Clare are badly injured in the auto accident but survive. Due to the ambiguous pronoun references, I had to re/read this hypertext for some time before realizing that Luke had two girlfriends, both of whom were killed. The deaths of Sherry and Jules, like the lives of the couples in *Quibbling*, are linked by similitude; therefore, their positions are not easily fixed.

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distopian visions of a technology-controlled future.

Along with memory and film, death is a prominent theme in "I Have Said Nothing." In alluding to Sherry's death, one characters states, "It runs over and over in your head, like the loop of film in the Volvo commercial, with the crash dummies bouncing forward in unison, choreographed in slomo like an overcranked version of *Swan Lake* or an Esther Williams number" (Run over). Here memory is a loop of film running over and over in one's head. While death is central to the narrative, it appears that death cannot be described or narrated. Death is silence, or nothing—thus the title of the hypertext: "I Have Said Nothing." Douglas shows us that this title was adapted from a quote from Augustine of Hippo: "*I have done nothing but wish to speak: if I have spoken, I have not said what I wished to say*" (But I have said nothing).[8] Wishing assumes the place of actual speech for Augustine. That is, wishing displaces speech, just as memory and desire, or wishing (perhaps even lust), overdetermine the present moment. The connection between the movies and death may be that the movies have desensitized late-twentieth-century Americans (or "Westerners" or people of the "First-World," including the Japanese)[9] to the reality of death—images and dramatic representations, or Baudrillard's simulacra, have overcoded and displaced the reality of death. The narrator informs us,

> Hell, we were weaned on the economics of death according to Hollywood. On the four o'clock movies wedged in between school and dinner, on the early evening and late Saturday films that kicked around on the UHF stations, you'd witnessed maybe eighteen thousand deaths. Shit, maybe thirty thousand: it

[8] Douglas does not name Augustine's text.

depended on how many times you'd watched *The Wild Bunch*. (We were weaned).

Films, television shows, commercials, and cartoons have taught us to expect narrative closure. We know how the *Bugs Bunny* cartoon will end, and we might think we know how our own lives will end. Our lives are overcoded by the narratives of popular entertainment. The lexia "Bound to happen" states,

> Shit, it was bound to happen, I suppose. Too much gin, too many Vivarin—remember how we used to eat those getting ready for exams? And the belief that nothing can touch you: the cars will always scream toward you like something out of a Warner Brothers cartoon. But they'll stop just like that too: the cowcatcher of the locomotive quivering just inches away from Bugs Bunny and the whole nine yards.

Death itself has been absorbed into hyperreality, even as an object of aesthetic enjoyment. Baudrillard claims, "The consummate enjoyment [*jouissance*] of the signs of guilt, despair, violence and death are replacing guilt, anxiety and even death in the total euphoria of simulation. [. . .] Every closed system protects itself in this way from the referential and the anxiety of the referential" (456). To replace is a re-place or dis-place, to take something's place. Simulacra move into the place once occupied by guilt, despair, violence, and death—or what used to be reality, the *no-thing* that now resides outside the closed system of simulation.

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[9] I am trying to avoid the colonialist binary of "developed" and "developing" nations.

Starting from the cover page, labeled "I Have Said Nothing," the default path for this hypertext always leads the lexia labeled "But I've said nothing" at which point the default path ends. At "But I've said nothing," which contains the Augustine quote, the reader can click on the Links button and choose between two links: *What?* and *Exeunt.*[10] Selecting *What?* brings up the lexia "A story"; pressing Enter one more time takes me to "The End," which states, in bold face, "That's all she wrote"—a statement with at least two meanings: it is another way of saying DOA, but it can also be read as "That's all the author wrote," which is not even true. If at "But I've said nothing" I select the *Exeunt* link, it brings up the lexia "Random sweepings," which reads, "*The fairest order in the world is a heap of random sweepings.* — Heraclitus." Eight default links later I return to "But I've said nothing."

When I reach "The End," I can backtrack, look at the list of links, do a text search, or press F9 to find a lexia that looks interesting, but the default path ends. I interpret this dead end in the default path as silence or *nothing*; it may signify the failure of narrative, or the inability of signifiers to signify death. Likewise, the Augustine quote may be interpreted as a comment on the inability of signifiers to fully represent (re-present) signifieds, or the fact that signifiers always miss the mark; signifiers only refer to other signifiers within the closed system of simulacra.

Still another interpretation for the words "I have said nothing" is that writers do not say anything; readers are needed to *speak the text*. To *speak* the text is another way of saying to *perform* the text. A writer can put orthographic marks on a page, but until a

[10] I am not counting the text link from the word "nothing" because I added this text link myself to tie

reader translates these marks into a meaningful text, the marks are just ink on paper. Ultimately, the writer is silent; only the reader speaks. The premise that has informed this study is that the reader has a relationship with a living text. Now, in this relationship the text is silent; it says nothing; therefore, the reader must speak the text.

Death itself, as a referential reality, is re-moved to a place outside the circle of hyperreality. Baudrillard speaks of the "end of metaphysics and the beginning of the era of hyperreality" (457). The real is dis-placed, dis-located, dis-lodged; it becomes a nomad. The feedback loop of hyperreality is characterized by "a process of instant renewal whereby reality is immediately contaminated by its simulacrum" (Baudrillard 457). There is an excess of simulation, as death scenes play over and over in film, but death itself is nowhere to be found; it is absent or absence. As the hypertext tells us, "All that vicarious experience, that immense education we receive in death [. . .] it all signifies nothing. You understand only absence" (All that vicarious). The lexia labeled ' is completely blank; it says nothing, and the road map, an option in the Storyspace menu, indicates that this lexia precedes "The End" in six different reading paths.

Additionally, the silence (i.e., the lack of a default link from "But I've said nothing") may relate to the stillness behind the "flickering signifiers" of film. Like hypertext lexias, filmic images flicker, but each image is actually a still. The illusion of the motion picture is produced by the rapid sequence of still images; yet hypertext differs from film in that the still images (lexias) are sequentially indeterminate. As a reader, when I reach a "dead end" lexia, I am forced to attend to that lexia alone rather than automatically bringing up

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together the lexias that contain this word.

another lexia. My default reading path is interrupted. Furthermore, inasmuch as I must click on the Links button, look at one of the graphical views, or take some other action to bring up another lexia, I am confronted by the interface—that is, the interface shifts from background to foreground.

At "The End," there are eight links listed under the Links button: *Thanatopsis*, *Which?*, *How?*, *Which?*, *Who?*, *Exeunt*, *Artifacts*, and *Why?* The first time I read this hypertext I started at the top link and went down this list, and I found that each link, with the exception of the *How?*, brought me back to "But I've said nothing." The *How?* link brings the reader back to "The End" after 14 links without passing through "But I've said nothing." I found that after selecting *Thanatopsis* and following the default path, it takes eighteen links to return to "But I've said nothing"; *Which* is six links away; the second *Which*, fourteen; *Who*, thirteen; *Exeunt*, ten; *Artifacts*, twenty; and *Why*, six. Although I have added a number of text links, these links do not affect the default paths. I've drawn a flow chart of these paths (Figure 4.8) to suggest the highly recursive, even spiraling, nature of this particular hypertext.

Like *Patchwork Girl*, the theme of dismemberment appears in "I Have Said Nothing." In three sequential lexias, the narrator states,

> Do you know what happens to you when a Chevy Nova with a 280 engine hits you going 75 miles an hour? — It fractures your collarbone; your scapula; your pelvis; your sacral, lumbar, thoracic, and cervical vertebrae. — It splinters your ribcage, compressing your liver, kidneys, spleen, stomach, intestines, lungs, and heart. — It fractures your skull and bruises your brain. — It causes massive

> hemorrhaging, throws the heart into cardiac arrest and hurls your central nervous system into profound shock. It breaks every bone in your body. Including your head. (Anatomy, Anatomized, Every one).

If Sherry were a cyborg, like the Patchwork Girl, she might be able to repair her broken body, to stitch it back together, but she is not a cyborg—unless we classify as a technology the drugs and alcohol she regularly consumes.

In *Cyborg*, the word *memory* appears in five lexias, and I have assigned the keyword *memory* to each of these. *Forget* occurs in eleven lexias; *remember*, in three; *wish*, in ten; *fantasy*, in twelve; *desire*, in fifteen. Of course, "re-membering" has a special connotation in cyborg literature (Haraway 150). On one level, the "member" is the penis or phallic signifier. Re-membering is also about reclaiming a lost past or utopian origin, but the cyborg has no origin story; it is assembled, not born. The cyborg, like a hypertext, is an assemblage, a rhizome.

As for wishing, the cyborg, insofar as it is rhizomatic, is strongly influenced by the body without organs, which, as mentioned previously, is pure desire. Pure desire is promiscuous; it seeks connections indiscriminately. I am interested in the concept of promiscuity because it is highly gendered; that is to say, given comparable lifestyles, a woman is far more likely than a man to be classified as promiscuous. In fact, men who have multiple sexual partners are more likely to be considered virile than promiscuous. In other words, the adjective *promiscuous* is applied to males and females asymmetrically. We may infer from a statement by Jackson's Mary Shelley that the Patchwork Girl has promiscuous traits: "She will ask one question, then another, and before long we will be

discussing blackberry preserves, sorcery, or Homeric odes, with a merry disregard for relevance—or perhaps because to her these things are all equally pertinent" (learn). Yet the Patchwork Girl voices a more common sentiment while gazing at her image in a mirror: "The impious intermarriage of graphic symbol and letter bred teeming monsters of language. Old stories must not be blended promiscuously and without distinction, as east, west, south, and north in a *chaos-manner*" (at the mirror). In other words, according to conventional thinking, east, west, south, and north must be kept in their proper places on the geometric grid; they mustn't slide around.

In literary hypertexts we often do not know who is talking, or rather whose words we are reading. We also may not know who is being referred to, as pronouns are used ambiguously, or promiscuously; this is especially true in "Lust," but *Quibbling* and "I Have Said Nothing" also feature a significant amount of pronoun ambiguity. Why is this? Why confuse the reader? My first hypothesis was that not knowing the speaker or writer's identity may force the reader to attend to the language rather than the speaker's socio-politically contingent credibility. Pronoun ambiguity, as well as ambiguous identity in general, has the potential to radically subvert the culturally constructed links between speaker and word, writer and text, *ethos* and *logos*. We can't rely on the ethos of the speaker or envision the speaker—at least not until we figure out who is speaking. Ethos is tied to subject positioning on the grid, and some positions are obviously more privileged. Hence, if male voices have more authority than female voices, it may be in the interest of women to conceal the speaker's gender or even to conceal the speaker's identity entirely, at least for part of a narrative. Rather than tracing text back to a speaker, or source, the

reader attends to how fragments of text articulate, how they join up, or edge each other. We trace the surface connections in the text rather than digging into the text for sources or roots.

Ethos is deeply gendered, inasmuch as "good women" have traditionally not spoken in public; so Quintilian's ideal of the good man speaking well does not fit for women rhetors (Mattingly 106). Ethos, then, is problematic for women rhetors. One way to get around this problem is to write multivoiced texts, as in the hypertext practice of weaving, or more accurately *patching*, texts together, or mixing narrative voices. In *Patchwork Girl*, Jackson, writing in her own narrative voice, states, "At certain places in this web I have lapsed without notice into another's voice, into direct quote or fudged restatement. My subject matter seemed to call for this very unceremonious appropriation. Those with a stronger sense of personal property may wish to know who is speaking when" (sources). The principle of property—private, intellectual, or otherwise—is thoroughly gendered, inasmuch as women were considered the property of men for thousands of years, and still are treated as such in many parts of the world. As the Patchwork Girl says, "I belong nowhere. This is not bizarre for my sex, however, nor is it uncomfortable for us, to whom belonging has generally meant, belonging TO" (I am). Hence, subverting, or at least changing, the principle of intellectual property may be in women's interest. Insofar as she belongs nowhere, the Patchwork Girl is a nomad; she has no assigned position on the grid.

It suddenly occurs to me that the notion—or I have been interrupted by the notion—that lust is about the permeability of boundaries or borders. When one is experiencing

lust, the "normal" sense of self changes; the self overflows its conventional borders, inhibitions drop away, and a sense of oneness may be felt with the "object" of one's ardor. Actually, the subject-object split is compromised. The self—the unified, self-contained, interiorized, Enlightenment self—is destabilized by the experience of lust. In lust we make connections exteriorly, as a rhizome. Margaret Morrison writes of "the precariousness and fluidity of subject positioning the masculinist signifying economy (that trap of a binary system) finds so dangerous to its rigidly potent efficiency" (206). It is it hard to overlook the phallic reference in the words "rigidly potent." Mystics, who often use the language of sex to describe their transcendent experiences, have referred to the "oceanic" merging with the other or with the universe. Consider Walt Whitman's mystical exuberance. From this perspective, "Lust" may be read as an experiment in breaking down boundaries, or border crossing. The nomad does not recognize borders. It makes sense, then, that the reader should have trouble distinguishing one character from another. The characters blend into each other—again, rhizomatically, like threads of felt.

In a more general sense, hypertext itself may be called lustful, as well as promiscuous. And, again, hypertext may be judged as guilty or sinful according to the textual-moral standards, or textual morality, of conventional text. As I write this, I am switching between this Word file, the "Lust" hypertext I have open in Storyspace, the pgatour.com website, where I am following the action in the second around of the 2002 Masters golf tournament, and also e-mail. One might call this promiscuous wreating. Furthermore, in mentioning what I am doing right now, I am subverting the principle of

timelessness as it applies to mainstream academic prose. Promiscuous wreating might be a tactical move, in other words.

I was reminded after sharing these ideas over e-mail with a colleague that I am not the first person to use the term "promiscuous" in reference to hypertext. Moulthrop writes,

> Hypertext is about connection—promiscuous, pervasive, and polymorphously perverse connection. It is a writing practice ideally suited to the irregular, the transgressive, and the carnivalesque. Culturally speaking, the promiscuity of hypertext (in the root sense of 'a tendency to seek relations') knows no bounds of form, format, or cultural level. (2515-16)

I like the definition of promiscuous as "a tendency to seek relations." Historically, some relations have, of course, been considered out-of-bounds. Some borders are not to be crossed, although such injunctions are applied unevenly based on gender, class, race, age, and so on. I particularly like Moulthrop's term, "miscegenation of discourses" (2516) for the way it revalues the term *miscegenation*.

The Quotidian, Quibbling, and Interrupting/Responding

A relation may be an alliance. Deleuze and Guattari write, "The tree is filiation, but the rhizome is alliance, uniquely alliance. The tree imposed the verb 'to be,' but the fabric of the rhizome is the conjunction, 'and . . . and . . . and . . .'" What Deleuze and Guattari call "the logic of the AND" (25) is parataxis; it is about surface-level relation, articulation, connection—not digging for foundations, sources, deep structures, or roots.

"The rhizome is an anti-genealogy" (11). By contrast, hypotaxis is a kind of "tree logic" (12). Trees dig deeply into the earth searching for nutrient sources, but they also rise upward, proudly displaying their individuality, their unique being, their I-ness. In *Patchwork Girl*, Jackson meditates on the permeable borders between past, present, and future. In a statement that seems to refer both to the experience of reading hypertext and the Patchwork Girl's life, she writes, "I am in a here and a present moment that has no history and no expectations for the future. Or rather, history is only a haphazard hopscotch through other present moments. How I got from one to the other is unclear" (this writing). The Patchwork Girl is a nomad, hopscotching through space-time. "Nomadology" is "the opposite of history" (Deleuze and Guattari 23).

Now, as so often, we are back to Plato, who viewed lust as incommensurate with the heights of philosophy. Lust might be a stepping stone to philosophy, as Plato argues in the *Phaedrus* and the *Symposium*, but ultimately lust must be sublimated—that is, made sublime (i.e., disembodied). It is feeling or emotion, so often, along with lust, attributed to women, that is responsible for promiscuous border crossing. The Patchwork Girl states, "The boundaries of strong feelings are maybe never clearly drawn, but most especially not for me. I had rediscovered sex—and I found it, everywhere" (sex). Women have forever been accused of smudging the neat striations of patriarchal culture, and also not staying in their proper place; however, insofar as they are nomads, women do not have a proper place—i.e., property, a place that they own and control.

There are topographical patterns in *Quibbling*: Lake Michigan, other lakes, Rocky Mountains, Flint Hills, Kansas, Wyoming plains, Missouri Hills, New England, river in

Midwest, and Spain. And, as I've noted, the text is also arranged by the three sections of lake, moon, and prairie. The reading is nomadic, like the characters. Places/topoi are important, but no single place is privileged over the others. This is a radically different way of reading or writing a text, as compared to the conventional plot, which is ultimately focused on a single event at a single time and place (e.g., the showdown in *High Noon*). The text resembles a fractal. Jackson's text is also nomadic, as the Patchwork Girl travels from her home in Europe to California and beyond. In "what shape" the Patchwork Girl refers to a decision that turned her "from a would-be settler to a nomad."

Quibbling may also be classified as a quotidian narrative. Quotidian, used as an adjective, means everyday or ordinary; it can also be used as a noun, as in referring to *the quotidian*. The quotidian is non-universal; it privileges the particular over the universal, the timely over the timeless, the situated over the abstract, the rhetorical over the philosophical. The lexia "all day" reads, "The gossip, family discussions, letters, passing fancies and daydreams that we tell ourselves all day in order to make sense of things. They are not quite like myths, or fairy tales, or literary fiction. They are instead the quotidian stream." The act of quibbling may itself be characterized as quotidian. Agnes, another character in *Quibbling*, is also associated with quotidian waves. Guyer refers to

> Agnes's problem about being in a daze. She seems to think that being by herself in a new place has a predictable rhythm, sort of like waves on a shore [. . .]. Nice rhythm. We like this, no problem. But when B.B. was with her, there was some sort of striated imposition on her daze, a buzz, or interference of complex

> mixtures. [. . .] The paradoxical nature of buzz-daze, of the complex mixtures of polar impulse, predictably becomes less of an enigma when we don't look too hard, that is, when we go along every day turning fragments into wholes, the quotidian stream. ("Buzz-Daze and the Quotidian Stream")

Going along every day turning fragments into wholes may be interpreted as a quintessential feminine experience, but for Agnes attending to B.B. while taking in a new environment causes a buzz-daze, which is a temporary disorienting condition that ends when the person experiencing it adjusts to new, complex stimuli. Furthermore, Agnes might be described as a "mobile," or nomadic, element—i.e., a constituent of smooth space.

Based on conventional occupational differences, mainstream, heterosexual, maternal women typically deal with the quotidian, while their male counterparts are often interested in, or even obsessed by, the heroic or the hero narrative. The quotidian is characterized by fragmentation, discontinuity, and interruption—at least when viewed in terms of the normative, masculine standard.

The daily life of "woman" (that is, the normative, maternal, heterosexual woman) is *continually interrupted*—by crying babies, visitors, telephone calls, unexpected errands, and so forth. Consequently, a woman's attention tends to flicker among a multitude of perceptions. As Reynolds writes, "Interruptions define the daily lives of working women who must negotiate second shifts, child care, and the sometimes blurry divisions between self and other, between work and home" (71). The stereotypic, paradigmatic man's life is much less subject to interruption. He may work for eight to ten hours without significant,

non-work related interruptions. Thus, the discontinuous narrative may be described as quotidian and "feminine," while the heroic narrative is much more unified, unilinear, and continuous. In other words, normative male and female working lives may be reflected or mirrored in different narrative structures. Moreover, the perpetually interrupted, nomadic life may be characterized as a curved life; it is indirect. There is curvature between point A and point B because the background of one's life is in motion; as exemplified by felt (the cloth), there is no division between fixed and mobile elements. Traditional "women's work" is repetitious and cyclical as well. Reynolds, in discussing "metaphors of theory as interruption" in cultural studies, states, "Those of us working at the intersection of feminism and composition can explore, without enforcing either silence or complicity, how interruption emphasizes discontinuities" (60, 71).

The above characterization may be skewed, however. If the male life is taken as the norm, then the female life seems very discontinuous. By analogy, if conventional text is taken as the norm, hypertext looks very discontinuous. But if we reverse the order, then "women's work" becomes the norm and discontinuity becomes the ground rather than figure. The implication of this reversal is that men ought to be brought into the discontinuous, quotidian realm of women. Considering the complex nature of contemporary life, there is little justification for privileging the artificial, efficiently gridded, tightly scheduled, masculine life. Both men and women ought to share equally in the demands of unpredictable, fragmented, quotidian existence.

Hypertext interrupts readerly silence. *Patchwork Girl* contains a lexia labeled "Interrupting D," in which the D stands for Derrida. Here Jackson quotes a sentence or

two from Derrida and then refutes or complicates Derrida's statement in some way. This format highlights the differences between oratory and conversation, as well as between conventional reading and conversation. When reading, just as when listening to a speech, we are not supposed to interrupt. As a number of scholars, including Derrida and Ong, have shown, written language reflects the Western oratorical (in contrast to conversational) heritage, which is a very white, male, middle- to upper-class tradition. Jackson's interruptions of Derrida are thus very subversive.

By contrast, in African-American culture, audience participation, as in the call-response, is normative. Call-response cannot accurately be termed 'interruption,' for the concept of interruption only applies within a discourse settings where the silent audience is expected to remain silent. Geneva Smitherman defines the call-response process as

> spontaneous verbal and nonverbal interaction between speaker and listener in which all the speaker's statements ('calls') are punctuated by expressions ('responses') from the listener. In the traditional black church, call-response is often referred to as the congregation's way of 'talking back' to the preacher [. . .] But it is a basic organizing principle of Black American culture generally, for it enables traditional black folk to achieve a unified state of balance and harmony which is fundamental to the traditional African world view. (104)

The call-response deserves attention by rhetoricians primarily because of the way it calls into questions traditional Western conceptions of audience, or more specifically, the dichotomy between active speaker/writer and silent listener/reader. As Smitherman writes, the "call-response seeks to synthesize speakers and listeners in a unified

movement. [. . .] We are talking, then, about an interactive network in which the fundamental requirement is active participation of all individuals. [. . .] there is no sharp line between performers or communicators and the audience" (108).

In this blurring of the borders between rhetor and audience, the temporal dimension appears to be privileged over the spatial dimension. Timing is vital in the call-response pattern, inasmuch as the responder must be in tune with the dialogic rhythm or *kairos*, choosing the precise moment to respond. In traditional Western rhetoric speakers/writers and listeners/readers occupy different spaces, literally, as when a speaker stands on a dais before a podium and the audience sits looking up. Similarly, writers needn't directly interact with their readers because their texts stand in for them in the reader's presence. In other words, authors and readers (producers and consumers) are assigned to separate spaces on the gridded plane of striated space. But this gridded space is blurred by the electronic read-write interface, and the temporal dimension moves to the foreground; that is to say, when engaging with a read-write interface, the reader picks opportune moments in the temporal flow of reading in which to respond to the text's call.

The rhythm of the call-response might be characterized as quotidian; it is an ordinary, everyday discourse modality, as distinguished from the rigidity of elite, masculine, striated literate culture. The quotidian is the reality of the "folk" or "people" rather than the exceptional, heroic individual. The quotidian narrative may be distinguished from the heroic narrative in terms of the experience of discontinuity, but all reading features discontinuity. Iser writes of the process whereby readers recreate texts:

> The act of recreation is not a smooth or continuous process, but one which, in its essence, relies on interruptions of the flow to render it efficacious. When we look forward, we look back, we decide, we change our decisions, we form expectations, we are shocked by their non-fulfillment, we question, we muse, we accept, we reject; this is the dynamic process of recreation. (964)

Again, looking forward and back, or the flickering glance[11] as distinguished from the steady gaze, is fundamental to reading—an ordinary process that is accentuated by hypertext. An interruption is a pause; it may also be compared to the interstitial space, or gap, between quanta, or packets of energy or information. Rather than a continuous, uninterrupted stream of information or text, hypertext features quanta in the form of lexias, or cells of text. Baudrillard asserts that in the world dominated by the code, digital, genetic, or otherwise, "space is no longer linear or unidimensional but *cellular*, indefinitely generating the same signals like the lonely and repetitive habits of a stir-crazy prisoner. [. . .] Life is now ruled by the discontinuous indeterminacy of the genetic code" (448-49). In other words, energy or information is chunked, and there are gaps, interstices, or interruptions between the chunks.

The themes of a text, such as art or the quotidian in *Quibbling*, serve as nodal points, pivot points, plateaus, or positions from which to look forward and back. The text itself, insofar as it is a rhizome, may consist of lines and no points, but as readers we create pivot points that allow us to make sense of a text. Iser writes, "This [recreation] process is steered by two main structural components within the text: first, a repertoire of familiar

[11] I am alluding to Katherine Hayles's essay, "Virtual Bodies and Flickering Signifiers."

literary patterns and recurrent literary themes, together with allusions to familiar social and historical contexts; second, techniques or strategies used to set the familiar against the unfamiliar" (964). In any text, the familiar occupies the background and the unfamiliar occupies the foreground. Reading is the process of setting the unfamiliar against the background of the familiar. Moving forward and back may be equated with shifting one's glance between foreground and background. We tie, or articulate, the new to the old.

The quotidian may be defined as the oscillation between familiar and unfamiliar. But if, on occasion, nearly everything seems unfamiliar—that is, if we are overwhelmed by the new or strange—we experience "buzz-daze." The quotidian is subject to endless interruptions; it is not a steady state, but more of a flickering experience. Perhaps something is foregrounded when the flickering glance "catches" on it a moment longer than usual.

These musings bring me back to my claim that hypertext defamiliarizes literacy. The familiar is made strange, which is a recurrent theme in *Quibbling*. Art estranges the familiar. The lexia "hands on him," reads "Priam thought her hands were sexy. He saw them as delicate and longer than they actually were. Her touch was animate with otherness, so strange and familiar." The word *strange* appears in sixteen lexias in *Quibbling*, while *familiar* is mentioned in six.

To quibble is to evade the point of an argument by caviling about words. To cavil is to raise trivial and frivolous objections, in other words, to interrupt the continuous, seamless flow of the discussion. Women have, of course, been characterized as trivial and

frivolous, as well as incapable of engaging in rational argument. In "rational argument" or debate, one is not supposed to interrupt the other speaker. A "gentleman" waits for the other speaker to finish before speaking. Such a pattern encourages speakers to hold forth. Women, however, may be accused of gossiping and chattering because they talk over one another or engage in call-response, rather than following the "rational" male standard. Of course, if women are supposed to remain silent, any talking at all, especially in the company of men, may be construed as chatter or gossip (Romaine 122). The act of Quibbling creates gossipy, "little stories" as opposed to grand tales or metanarratives: "Like rumors or babblings, little stories [. . .] undermine the law's intentions because they ooze through the law's grids; the little stories (lived individually) do not speak unequivocally—they leak" (Morrison 207). Here Morrison may be alluding to gridded, striated space.

A narrative composed of little stories has multiple plateaus rather than a single climax, and the hypertext reader is motivated by the plateau experience rather than closure. "A plateau is always in the middle, not at the beginning or end. A rhizome is made of plateaus. [. . .] Each plateau can be read as starting anywhere and can be related to any other plateau" (Deleuze and Guattari 21-22). The heroic narrative, which I have contrasted with the quotidian narrative, has a center, a single event that unifies the narrative. In other words, the hero narrative is phallic. The quotidian narrative does not have a center; it is multiple, dispersed, and nomadic; there is no single event that serves as a focal point for the narrative, as Joyce's *afternoon* does with the auto accident (Landow 207). The singular, heroic event defines the heroic character; this event may

"make the man." The heroic quest is personal and individual; it is premised on separating from the community, the mother and all females (Fiedler 24-26). By contrast, quotidian reality is highly social, even promiscuous. The daily round of the traditional woman is social; she is enmeshed in domestic and community relations. At the end of *Prelude IV*, T.S Eliot writes, "Wipe your mouth, and laugh; / The worlds revolve like ancient women / Gathering fuel in vacant lots" (lines 14-16).

CHAPTER 5

Situating Hypertext in Composition Studies, the University, and Beyond

Literary hypertext, feminist epistemology, and feminist rhetoric each, in its own way, privileges multiplicity over uniformity, rigid consistency, and hegemonic "harmony." In other words, feminist artists, teachers, and scholars regularly engage in the deconstruction of totalizing systems and the construction of new types of associations that valorize difference. It follows, then, that feminists and others engaged in the promotion of critical agendas will not shy away from conflict; hence, I agree with Susan Jarratt's critique of schools of feminism that "vigorously reject argument on the grounds that it is a kind of violence" ("Feminism"106). Sally Miller Gearhart, for instance, claims that "any attempt to persuade is an act of violence" (195). Reasoned argument is eminently feminist; it is also necessary if one is not to retreat into separatism or quietism. It must be stressed, however, that truly feminist argument is open-ended and dialogic, as opposed to closing off arguments or silencing an opponent by getting in the last word. It is in this context that hypertext, a thoroughly open-ended medium, can be of great value.

In this chapter I sketch out a vision of the feminist-informed composition classroom as a contact zone. Mary Louise Pratt defines contact zones as "social spaces where cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power, such as colonialism, slavery, or their aftermaths as they are lived out in many parts of the world today" (584). With respect to race, we may still

be living in the aftermath of slavery, a fact not to be overlooked by white instructors. We are also haunted by ancient, oppressive gender codes, such as the principle of separate spheres. As Jarratt writes,

> Even when teachers announce the desire to create a particular climate, they can't neutralize by fiat the social positions already occupied by their students. [. . .] Differences of gender, race, and class among students and teachers provide situations in which conflict does arise, and we need to learn more than the ideal of the harmonious, nurturing composition class in our repertory of teaching practices to deal with these problems. ("Feminism" 113)

We can go take this argument further by treating such conflicts as learning opportunities or teachable moments rather than problems. Contact zones, in other words, are ripe with learning potential.

Computer technology in classrooms also introduces power asymmetries; that is to say, insofar as a computer encourages certain work habits and discourages others, it exerts power over its users. The computer creates a context for work (learning and teaching), just as the vestiges of slavery and the separate spheres principle influence contemporary educational contexts. It is only when users learn to use tools in innovative, unconventional ways that they take back some power, and a feminist approach to hypertext offers a "way in" to innovative uses of technology.

Asymmetrical relations of power manifest in many other ways, such as the physical structure of the classroom. For example, upon entering a classroom on the first day of the semester, the teacher and the students immediately confront the power of the architecture,

as the design of the room encourages certain ways of learning and discourages others. The placement of the chalkboard or whiteboard behind the instructor's desk, the physical arrangement of computers or student desks (and whether they are moveable), the location of the door (and whether there is one or two doors), and so forth, all have effects on teaching and learning. More overtly, the fact that the teacher has control of the syllabus and the grade book is not lost on anyone. Each of these elements contributes to a complex, multilayered classroom context.

These types of power asymmetries must be faced openly and, if possible and desirable, transformed. Pratt uses the idea of the contact zone "to reconsider the models of community that many of us rely on in teaching and theorizing and that are under challenge today" (584-85). The concept of the contact zone closely resembles what I have discussed previously as a Borderland—i.e., a site where, in Anzaldua's words, "two or more cultures edge each other" (19). The type of feminist pedagogy advocated in this study is political, in that it actively resists sexism, racism, classism, heterosexism, ageism, and disability-based discrimination, yet it resists these forces, not by avoiding them, by unmasking and openly confronting them in the classroom. In other words, simple notions of community must be scrutinized. As Pratt argues,

> The idea of the contact zone is intended in part to contrast with ideas of community that underlie much of the thinking about language, communication, and culture that gets done in the academy. [. . .] Languages [are] seen as living in 'speech communities,' and these [tend] to be theorized as discrete, self-defined,

> coherent entities, held together by a homogeneous competence or grammar shared identically and equally among all the members. (590-91)

This vision of the homogenized classroom community needs be interrogated because without an acute awareness of difference, dissenting voices will be silenced. As Pratt states, "If a classroom is analyzed as a social world unified and homogenized with respect to the teacher, whatever students do other than what the teacher specifies is invisible or anomalous to the analysis" (592). In other words, differences are treated as anomalies or noise in an otherwise efficient, self-regulating system. The discourse of a contact zone may be framed as a clash between strategies and tactics, in de Certeau's sense of these terms. As stated in the previous chapter, the strong protect their positions (their places) through strategies, while the weak have recourse only to tactics.

First-year composition can be a contact zone in at least two senses: It is a site where different races, classes, and genders meet, but also a site where different genres and literacy technologies come together in a creative, tension-filled clash. Hypertext is also a contact zone technology, in that it has come into being on the edge between print literacy and electronic multimedia. The fact that hypertext is a contact zone technology means that those invested in print literacy will strive to articulate hypertext in ways that suit their interests. Corporations that produce telecommunications technology, government policy makers, university administrators, members of the entertainment and advertising industries, journalists, artists, anarchists and fascists, and innumerable others have their own ideas for how hypertext technology ought to be used, whether they use the term "hypertext" or not. Consequently, articulating a feminist theorization of hypertext (and

having it embraced by others) is no simple task. But this is where rhetoric comes into play: I have to supply good reasons for why my vision of hypertext merits serious consideration.

Feminist Pedagogies

It may be useful at this point it to present a brief overview of feminist pedagogy. While there are many feminist pedagogies, we may point to a number of commonalities as we discuss feminist pedagogy in the abstract. According to Catherine Lamb, feminist pedagogy puts an "emphasis on cooperation, collaboration, shared leadership, and the integration of the cognitive and the affective" (195). The emphasis on cooperation and collaborative is fundamental to feminist pedagogy, yet feminist pedagogy cannot simply be subsumed into the broad class of social epistemic or social constructionist pedagogies, for these approaches to teaching do not necessarily feature gender as an analytic category; that is to say, one can be a social constructionist teacher without being a feminist.

Bernice Malka Fisher, in *No Angel in the Classroom*, defines feminist pedagogy as "teaching that engages students in political discussion of gender injustice" (44). Fisher articulates feminist pedagogy as a consciousness-raising process and places it within the larger context of feminism as a social movement—the movement for gender justice (28). According to Fisher, feminist consciousness-raising is a process involving two primary elements. The first aspect is a *shift of attention*—i.e., a change in perspective or new way of seeing oneself in relation to one's environment; this shift "may be triggered by reading

Gore argues that feminist pedagogy consists of social visions and instructional strategies, which are treated, respectively as "macro" and "micro" concerns. Gore writes,

> Unlike 'mainstream' pedagogical discourses, the critical and feminist work on pedagogy has addressed 'macro' issues in schooling, such as the institutions and ideologies within which pedagogy is situated. Beginning from the premise that schooling is not neutral, critical and feminist approaches to pedagogy emphasize their own social vision(s) for education and schooling, in an attempt to connect the macro to the micro. (*Struggle* 4)

Gore notes that mainstream, or malestream, pedagogies have their own (conservative) social visions, although they are not often explicitly stated or theorized, or they are only explicitly articulated after they have been challenged by critical or feminist pedagogies. In other words, until they are directly challenged, hegemonic social visions can remain invisible or unspoken. By contrast, the democratic, oppositional, and radical social visions undergirding critical and feminist pedagogies are foregrounded, often at the expense of concrete instructional strategies. But by focusing on both broad social visions and specific classroom practices, Gore argues, critical and feminist pedagogies are more likely to achieve their goals (4-6).

Taking my cue from Gore, in this chapter I discuss my vision of hypertext's place in composition studies and the university[1] and suggest a number specific instructional strategies for using hypertext technology in the classroom.[2]

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[1] I use the term "the university" in this chapter to denote a cultural ideal—the ideal of the American research university as informed by ideal of the nineteenth-century German research university, as

When the first-year composition requirement was introduced to American higher education, in the late nineteenth century, it was assumed, on most campuses, that composition programs would contribute to or support the global agendas of the university. In other words, it would function as a service course (Berlin 58-62). But by the early 1960s, compositionists had begun to tap in to the ancient discipline of rhetoric, which gave legitimacy to composition studies, and rhetoric-composition, or "rhet-comp," developed as a research field.[3] Furthermore, as it has emerged as a discipline, rhetoric-composition has often worked against the hierarchical, androcentric design of the university; which is to say, composition studies has created a space within which to operate tactically, as opposed to being assimilated into the university, which is *place*—i.e., a site of strength, stability, and conservatism. In other words, first-year composition inhabits a contact zone, a site where the powerful university and weak, nomadic, recalcitrant rhet-comp come into daily contact. And as long it insists on inhabiting this zone, rhet-comp can resist assimilation into the place of the university; hence, composition studies, especially if it influenced by feminists, will maintain its resident alien status indefinitely.

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distinguished from any actual university. "The university" is an abstraction used here for the sake of argument.

[2] See Appendix C for composition assignments based on Storyspace and Appendix D for a sampling of student comments on such assignments.

[3] According to James Berlin ("Contemporary Composition" 12), two early textbooks instrumental in the development of rhetoric-composition were Richard Hughes and Albert Duhamel's *Rhetoric: Principles and Usage* (1962) and Edward P.J. Corbett's *Ancient Rhetoric for the Modern Student* (1965).

I mentioned in a previous chapter de Certeau's argument that a grid of city streets is transformed from a place to a space only when drivers begin to break traffic laws or walkers begin to J-walk or otherwise break the rules laid down by the city planners. With this principle in mind, we can draw a parallel between de Certeau's discussion of the city and the present discussion of the university. According to de Certeau,

> The 'city' founded by utopian and urbanistic discourse is defined by the possibility of a three-fold operation:
>
> 1. The production of its own space (*un espace proper*): rational organization must thus repress all the physical, mental and political pollutions that would compromise it.
>
> 2. the substitution of a nowhen, or of a synchronic system, for the indeterminable and stubborn resistances offered by traditions; univocal scientific strategies [. . .] must replace the tactics of users who take advantage of 'opportunities' [. . .].
>
> 3. finally, the creation of a *universal* an anonymous *subject* which is the city itself [. . .]. (94)

Thus, the university, like the city, becomes a subject—a grand subject with a will of its own, which is carried out by the administration. Thus, de Certeau goes on to argue, "Administration [i.e., city administration] is combined with a process of elimination in this place organized by 'speculative' and classificatory operations" (94). In other words, that which does not further the aims of the city or resists classification is eliminated. Furthermore, one could argue that the university far surpasses the city in its use of

"speculative and classificatory operations." Professors (keeping with the classical ideal of the university) are paid, first of all, to speculate, and only secondarily to teach, and, of course, academic disciplines are rigidly classified. The first aspect, the privileging of speculation, or research, over teaching explains the notoriously bad undergraduate teaching at top flight research universities, and rigid departmentalization impedes scholarly cross-pollination and hurts students by fragmenting their educations. But one implication the poststructuralist analysis I have undertaken in this study is that rigid disciplinary classifications are ultimately subverted by the denizens of the university (i.e., professors, graduate assistants, and undergraduates), particularly within marginalized fields such as rhetoric-composition and women's studies. In other words, the smooth space created by "undisciplined" outsiders and newcomers inevitably bleeds into the striated space (or place) of the university. I return to this argument after expanding on the theme of the contact zone.

Hypertext may facilitate the break down of what Nedra Reynolds calls "the rigid boundaries that separate life and politics inside and outside the academy" (71). Such claims are obviously controversial, and I am aware that the philosophical approach presented in this study is far from uncontroversial. More specifically, the controversy has to do with first-year composition's status as a service course. What I mean is that if composition is a service course, rather than devoting time and energy to hypertext theory, feminism, and so forth, we should simply prepare first-year students for "higher level" courses. In the conventional, masculinist, hierarchical model, students take their "basics" before moving on (or up) to "more important" subjects. But if we reject the service

model, composition can be an end in itself. Composition, then, will not be a gatekeeper, adjusting students to the ideology of academia; it may subvert this ideology and the rigid stratification and compartmentalization (or departmentalization) of the four-year college curriculum. And this system ought to be subverted because it has a propensity to produce docile, politically alienated consumers, rather than engaged citizens. Students ought to be given the tools to shape their own universities and communities, as opposed to being passively shaped by them. Furthermore, rhetoric, if it can finally throw off Current Traditional pedagogy, offers the foundation for this kind of active engagement. As Wayne Booth has argued, the English composition course might serve as the foundation of the university curriculum.[4] In sum, with the aid of rhetoric, students and faculty might make the university less like a factory and more like a living, adapting organism.

An additional factor, as suggested above, has to do with the rigid departmental structure of the university—a structure that impedes students' ability to make connections across disciplines. Relke states that "the chief obstruction to integration is not specialization, but rather, departmentalization." She goes on to claim that "the disciplines as we have constructed them are chiefly containment structures, while interdisciplinarity is a process. Students enter our classrooms as interdisciplinarians by inclination because they were born into a world that is not, for the most part, ordered and structured on the disciplinary model." While Relke is not unique in arguing for interdisciplinarity, she takes this argument a step further by addressing gender, claiming that women's and

[4] I haven't yet tracked down the text where Booth makes this argument, although I have heard him make this argument in oral presentations.

gender studies offer models for interdisciplinarity. She argues that "feminist scholars are by definition interdisciplinarians, although many of them who work in traditional departments don't often get the chance fully to develop their interdisciplinary skills." Relke speaks of "the special nature of women's studies: it's not merely one program, or even one department among many. Gender is a phenomenon that cuts across all disciplines, bar none. [. . .] [W]omen's studies is the interdiscipline par excellence." Thus, given the rhetorical orientation of women's studies, we may move beyond Booth's position to argue that, not simply rhetoric, but an explicitly *gendered* rhetoric may serve as the interdisciplinary foundation of the university curriculum. Such a curriculum might integrate the humanities and the sciences, and, as Relke goes on to write, "[O]nly by creating a truly interdisciplinary space between the arts and the sciences can we hope to address social and scientific concerns together, and cultivate in future generations an interconnected vision of knowledge, an understanding of knowledge as reverence for life, rather than mastery over it" (unpaginated). It is this "interconnected vision of knowledge" that is most truly feminist.

Maps and Itineraries

Closely connected to places and spaces are maps and tours (or itineraries). As summarized by de Certeau, Charlotte Linde and William Lobov studied the descriptions a group of New York residents gave of their apartments, and they divided the descriptions into two types: the map and the tour. "The first is of the type: 'The girls' room in next to the kitchen.' The second: 'You turn right and come into the living room.'" Linde and

Lobov found that 97% of the descriptions were of the tour type (119). The tour is "the basis of everyday narrations," while the map is "a plane projection totalizing observations." The tour is associated with quotidian reality, or everyday experience, while the map is part of scientific discourse. Furthermore, "It seems that in passing from 'ordinary' culture to scientific discourse, one passes from one pole to the other" (119). Science, in other words, is premised on the denotative mapping of nature or reality as a referent.

According to de Certeau, maps and itineraries were once complementary, but since about the 15th century, "the map has slowly disengaged itself from the itineraries that were the condition of its possibility." The map, that is, became privileged over the itinerary. Prior to the elevation of the map over the itinerary, the "first medieval maps included only the rectilinear marking out of itineraries [. . .] along with the stops one was to make [. . .] and distances calculated in hours or in days, that is, in terms of the time it would take to cover them on foot" (de Certeau 120). Hence, the itinerary is temporal, or at least spatiotemporal, as distinguished from the wholly spatial modern map. The itinerary, moreover, is closely associated with tactical, smooth space. There is no proper place, or place of one's own, on a tour. In sum, itineraries belong to quotidian reality; they narrate everyday, tactical operations carried out in foreign territory.

Itineraries are part of the narrative language game, whereas mapping is a denotative language game. The term "language games," which Lyotard borrowed from Ludwig Wittgenstein, means,

> [E]ach of the various categories of utterance can be defined in terms of rules specifying their properties and the uses to which to which they can be put—in exactly the same way as the game of chess is defined by a set of rules determining the properties each of the pieces, in other words, the proper way to move them. [. . .] every utterance should be thought of as a move in a game. (10)

Moves are actions in the Burkean sense—i.e., they may be analyzed in terms of agents, acts, scenes, agencies, and purposes (*GM* xv). Games, of course, have proper places, or scenes, such as a chess board, a physics laboratory, or a composition classroom. Hence, to make a move is to act with intention within a particular, codified scene.

In contrast with everyday knowledge, scientific knowledge is founded on the denotative language game. But as Lyotard writes, "[S]cientific knowledge does not represent the totality of knowledge; it has always existed in addition to, and in competition with [. . .] narrative" (7). Scientific knowledge and traditional or customary knowledge (i.e., *nomos*) may be distinguished by "the preeminence of the narrative form in the formulation of traditional knowledge" (19). Narrative knowledge, then, is thoroughly social and dialogic. Lyotard states further that the "narrative tradition is also the tradition of defining a threefold competence—'know-how,' 'knowing how to speak,' and 'knowing how to hear'—through which the community's relationship to itself and its environment is played out" (21). In stark contrast, "Scientific knowledge requires that one language game, denotation, be retained and all others excluded. A statement's truth-value is the criterion determining its acceptability. [. . .] In this context, one is 'learned' if one can produce a true statement about a referent" (25). My point here is that an itinerary,

as opposed to a map, allows one to break out of the masculinist trap of the denotative language game. In short, if composition is to be more than a service course, student competence must encompass, in Lyotard's words, "know-how, knowing how to speak, and knowing how to hear." Such an approach is fully congruent with composition as a study of language acts involving encoders, decoders, texts, and contexts (Lunsford, "Rhetoric and Composition" 79).

Maps privilege the text over the writer, reader, and context. Thus, a conventional scholarly text is a kind of map, especially if it is written in the third-person. But a travel log, insofar as it takes subjectivity into account, is far different and offers the potential for a "thick description," as that term is used by Clifford Geertz (3). My point, then, is that we should teach students to write travel logs, in the fashion of the thick ethnographic—or better, autoethnographic (Pratt 585)—description, to narrate their encounters with texts. Such a practice, particularly if the travel logs were written in hypertext, would facilitate invention; that is, by tapping into the creative potential of paratactic, hypertextual arrangement, rhetoric might become truly epistemic.

When a reader narrates an encounter with a text, she or he articulates a reading space. By contrast, when a reader analyzes a text impersonally or objectively, in effect saying, "This is what is present in the text" or "This is what other readers are likely to find when the go there," a map, or "thin description," of a place is drawn. S-knows-that-P statements are denotative utterances; that is, propositional statements are a kind a mapping, serving mainly to exhibit of the products of knowledge (de Certeau 121). In objectivist literary theory, the referent is the text, and criticism amounts to mapping a text

through the denotative language game. But, if rhetoric is truly epistemic, students ought to articulate spaces, rather than being passively influenced by places. In other words, subjectivity must be taken into account in order to counteract the displacement and erasure of the reading subject.

The Storyspace read-write interface enables the creation of an itinerary or log of the reading experience, and using such an interface in the composition or literature classroom would allow students' reading habits and strategies, rather than just their writing, to become the subject of peer review and study. The reading and writing processes are intimately linked, yet the usual means of evaluating a student's understanding of or engagement with a read-only text is by assigning a separate piece of writing, as a critical essay written on a literary text. A major flaw of such assignments is that they are premised on the extraction from a text of a pre-existing meaning, or "content." Journaling may be presented as a better pedagogical option, but journaling does nothing to blur the primary/secondary text border. We could also require that students write in their texts and then collect each of the texts and study the marginalia, but this is hardly a good option. The electronic read-write interface is plainly the best means of studying this type of engagement with a text, inasmuch as such a practice would tend to transform the text from a place to a space.

Although a software environment like Storyspace would facilitate the kind of activity I am describing, just about any electronic textual interface would work to some extent. For example, when working with MS Word, one can use the reviewing tools to comment at length on a text. The comments appear in bubbles when the pointer passes over

highlighted text; the comments may also be read in a separate window at the bottom on the document and/or printed out, very much like endnotes. Yet this option preserves the primary/secondary text distinction, and the primary text remains central. An alternative would be to use the hyperlink function in Word to create comments or annotations in a separate file, and this option offers the possibility of creating true hypertext and breaking away from the authority of the centralized, primary text. But of course, the file must be written in or converted to Word format in order to use these options. Conventional texts posted on the Web, as many literary texts now are, would work fine once downloaded and converted to Word format.

Yet, in comparison to Storyspace, Word's reviewing and hyperlinking functions are quite cumbersome and constraining. For instance, Storyspace allows multiple links from a single lexia. A further step away from the authority of primary text may be taken by writing comments directly in a lexia and linking from this text, either to existing lexias or to new lexias created by the wreater.

Perhaps most significantly, when we read a student's essay, we see the finished product; we don't see the groping after meaning, which we might see in an electronic read-write interface. By studying the tentative hypotheses, questions, exclamations, and miscellaneous annotations that a student writes within Storyspace lexia, a teacher may gain insight into the student's reading process. We may observe the evolution of the student's understanding or interpretative construction of a text. In contrast, the essay that is turned in after the reading process has been more or less completed may be compared, in Daniel Ferrer's words, "to the ashes remaining when the fire is consumed, or to the

footprints on the ground after the dance is over" (56). In other words, the electronic read-write interface would allow one to study the student's engagement with a text from a genetic perspective—i.e., we can study how an essay came to be, rather just studying the essay as a finished (or revisable) product.

One might argue that reading student drafts offers the same insight into a student's groping after meaning; yet in comparison with the comments written within a text by a reader as she is directly engaging with that text, a rough draft is a polished piece of work. Furthermore, an essay draft or finished essay is decontextualized, or abstracted from the con/text from which it arose; it is also secondary and derivative, very much like the footprints and ashes in the above analogy. By contrast, comments, as well as more extensive text, written directly into a text are fully contextualized, and we need not draw a distinction between primary and secondary texts.

Short-Term Texts and Invention

With the conventional, thesis-driven essay we can, to a certain extent, contain and constrain what students write. By fixing the form we can contain the content, inasmuch as only certain things can be said in a conventional essay, along with certain ways of saying them. For example, given the traditional constraints, a student writer who expects her work to be accepted cannot make mutually exclusive or unsupported claims, write tangents that never come back to the main argument or topic, or write from multiple subject positions. Nonetheless, students are still quite capable of subtly subverting their instructors' intentions, creatively appropriating the "master's tools," or writing to a peer

audience below the instructor's "radar screen." But one question that arises is, Why not make such creativity easier?

In rethinking the traditional essay, composition teachers might want to consider assigning single-page texts, which might resemble single memos or hyperlinked collections of memos, rather than traditional essays. One justification for such assignments is that these "short-term" student texts would present an opportunity to play with multiple subject positions. Each short text might express a different subject position, and this type of writing would be tactical—that is, opportunistic or kairotic. By contrast, the traditional academic essay is supposed to express, from beginning to end, a single, consistent subject position. As I noted in the previous chapter, tactics are short-term operations in foreign territory (de Certeau 37-39), and the foreign territory I am concerned with here is traditional academic text.

The reason the traditional academic text (e.g., the journal article, research report, or student essay) is problematic is that it tends to shape students and scholars to its own ends, and in this sense the academic text may be compared to the university. In other words, the genre of the academic text is a powerful context. When students enter this environment they have very little power or authority; they must conform to the pre-established conventions, the rules of this particular place. I do not mean to suggest that we should do away with traditional academic writing. Rather, we ought to make tactical incursions into this territory so that it does not solidify its authority to such a degree that it will never change or adapt to changing conditions.

A further justification for a shift to short-term, tactical student texts, including texts written inside other texts, is that in the paratactic juxtaposition of such texts rhetoric might be more readily experienced as epistemic. In the convergence of paratactic texts meaning is created and new insights come to the fore. Through the exploration of metaphor, metonymy, analogy, paradox, discursive gaps, serendipitous intersections, tangents, and so on, meaning may be discovered or invented. Of course, compositionists have recommended this type of activity to student writers for years. Donald Murray, for instance, urges students to "Play with words, images, facts. See if any of them connect. [. . .] Follow surprise or connection in your mind or on paper to see where your thinking with take you" (4). Murray goes on to describe the technique of brainstorming, "a method of extracting from memory what you don't know you remember [. . .] and allowing these pieces of information to rub against one another" (7). A writing environment like Storyspace simply makes this process easier. Rather than simply reporting what is already known, in a denotative fashion, drafting in hypertext facilitates the creation of new knowledge. It also makes sense that many of these hypertexts be authored collaboratively in order to further disperse the subject positions and increase the opportunities for invention.

In advocating the composition of plural, paratactic texts, I am arguing for a substantial modification of the canon of arrangement, so as to allow arrangement to stimulate invention. Arrangement and invention, in other words, can be brought closer together, with each informing the other in the fashion of a feedback loop. I also want to

counteract the compulsion to erase and rush toward closure because the drive toward closure, which is a masculinist ideal, short-circuits the invention process.

Hypertext is inimical to closure and origins; therefore, the classical disposition of introduction, body, and conclusion does not hold for hypertext. Hence, the deferred closure that is characteristic of hypertext has serious implications for traditional, Western rhetorical argument. As Pamela Gilbert asserts, in hypertext there "will be no closure other than that created by the reader's decision to stop interacting with the text—which will mean the demise of formal argument as we know it, since that is driven by closure" (260). Closure is essentially *enclosure*, inasmuch as it reflects the masculinist concern with territoriality; therefore, since closure alludes to the enclosing of territory (often textual or discursive territory), we might use the term *(en)closure* to signify this double meaning. In the hypertext contour, the world of "what's next" (Joyce, *Othermindedness* 42), what's around the corner of the contour—that which cannot be enclosed—is pushed to the foreground. (En)closure is indefinitely deferred; therefore, denotative mapping, or the mapping of a referent, breaks down.

(En)closure is a feature of expository writing, a genre in which an objective referent is kept clearly in view. Exposition, in other words, follows the rules of the denotative language game, with the referent being a text (in the broad, semiotic sense of "text" as any interpretable phenomenon). And while hypertext may be applied to exposition, expository writing limits the potential, or goes against the grain, of hypertext. As Gilbert writes, "hypertext structures meaning like collage—conductively rather than in- or deductively, like exposition" (260). While exposition illuminates an objective referent, in

collage signifiers clash with (or edge up against) other signifiers. Moreover, collage foregrounds the gaps between the signifiers, and these gaps invite invention; that is, we produce text to fill in the gaps.

Such an approach to composition works against the perfectionism and linearity of traditional pedagogy. As Burke claimed, human beings are "rotten with perfection" (*LSA* 16). Perfection is a masculinist, modernist ideal, and it is premised on the erasure (or if not outright erasure, then assimilation) of non-mainstream and eccentric lines of development (e.g., non-western indigenous cultures, tangential ideas not included in a final essay draft). The final draft of a text, insofar as it is a product of a linear, perfectionist paradigm, represents the erasure and assimilation earlier drafts.

Inventing and Storyspacing

Many writers and researchers have shown that Storyspace is an effective invention tool. Working with small sections of texts (lexias), placing thoughts side-by-side, linking together related ideas, and reading and writing recursively are a few of the invention techniques facilitated by Storyspace. According to Murray, "Writing usually comes in fragments—details, hints, clues, collisions of information, half ideas and quarter ideas, bits and pieces of information, scraps that have fallen out of books, from TV or radio, from conversation at the next table or in another room. The writer plays with these scraps to see what they mean" (7). Personally, I often draft essays, conference papers, or chapters in Storyspace, a process I call "storyspacing." Once a significant body of text is generated, I can easily export the Storyspace lexias to a text file and then copy this into a

Word file. The next stage is to labor over the linear coherence of the text. But of course, in addition to this kind of anecdotal evidence, large-scale studies are needed before we can definitively state that storyspacing supports the invention process of student writers.

Others have reported similar success using Storyspace as an invention tool. For instance, M. A. Syverson made the following statement:

> Storyspace was central to the process by which [my] dissertation was constructed. Although the dissertation took a conventional linear final form, I used Storyspace to scaffold the concepts and represent relationships among them. I had a box for each chapter, one for the abstract, one for 'notes on the fly' and one called 'concept map.' [. . .] Storyspace was absolutely essential to the cognitive effort of keeping a large quantity of concepts, quoted material, notes, reflections, and relationships and also making some sense out of them. [. . .] [I]t is a great cognitive processing environment.

It is as a "cognitive processing environment" that I see the most potential for Storyspace as a composition tool, and my own experience is congruent with Syverson's. For anecdotal evidence in support of Storyspace as a pedagogical tool, we can turn to a Courseware Review by Jeanie Crain published in *Computers and the Humanities*:

> Having used Storyspace for my own writing as well as in the writing classroom, I have come to appreciate its instructional value first hand. [. . .] Students were [. . .] led through a complex generative process into drafting, revision, and final products. Structure and detail were remarkable in final versions. [. . .] Storyspace is by far the best software I have seen for teaching writing as a process. [. . .] The

> software is as useful for advanced researchers as it is for undergraduate students. [. . .] Storyspace encourages writers to work in the middle, at the beginning, or at the end of papers, which facilitates initial brainstorming. (137-141)

As I've stated previously, hypertext is essentially about reading and writing *in the middle*. Beginnings and endings tend to present the most difficulties for students and professional writers, but a writing medium such as Storyspace offers a way around such problems.

Innovations in classroom practice, such as those described by Crain, would be expected to leak out, as a sort of contagion, into other sites in the university and beyond, bleeding across traditional borders. In fact, echoing Moulthrop's statement on the "miscegenation of discourses" (2516), Johnson-Eilola argues that "hypertext represents the opportunity for an unparalleled blurring of discourses—a way to question not only the boundaries separating first-year students, advanced undergraduates, graduate students, and professors, but also those between academy and business, the sciences and the humanities, management and the line worker" (21). In other words, hypertext holds the potential to transform the *places* of the academy, science, and business into different kinds of *spaces*; hypertext technology may blur the borders between these discourse places, which amounts to altering a quite extensive map.

As discussed in a previous chapter, conventional text, insofar as it is a zero-sum game, follows a linear logic that compels us to blot out one thing when something newer and better comes along. With conventional text, the revision process is ultimately motivated by the desire to erase previous drafts, or to pretend that earlier, inferior versions never existed, despite the fact that scholars are continually digging up and

studying drafts and earlier editions of texts to piece together their genesis. For such scholars, the electronic text presents crucial problems, given the ease of erasure. Yet there is no reason that student writers could not save drafts and link them together, allowing acentered, plural texts to replace the conventional, singular "final draft." For this kind of assignment MS Word's hyperlinking function would work quite well.

In a hypertextual space, there is no need to erase an old text when a new one is written; the new text is just a new path or tangent that may or may not be followed. Therefore, as a pedagogical practice, students could hyperlink a series of drafts, which would create a kind of palimpsest and present a new perspective on the writing process. In other words, the several layers of text could all be accessible.

A technology cannot simply be used as a tool; it influences the agency of the user, facilitating some activities, processes, and goals and constraining others. A literacy technology, such as Storyspace, creates a context for reading and writing. Thus, in using any technology in a classroom, we need to consider the technology's degree of inelasticity or resistance to our plans. As Johnson-Eilola writes, "Hypertext (or any technology) is never neutral or transparent to our intentions" (14). Yet until we seriously engage with a technology we have no clue how that technology shapes our activities. The most naïve attitude would be to assume that one can perform old, familiar activities more efficiently or better without that activity being substantially altered. The word processor is not a better or more efficient typewriter; it is a different machine.

Consumerism and the Discourse of Efficiency

The political aspect of a feminist theorization of hypertext has to do with subverting the "discourse of efficiency" (Johnson-Eilola 85), which is directly linked to technology. As Lyotard argues, technology follows the "principle of optimal performance: maximizing output [. . .] and minimizing input [. . .]. Technology is therefore a game pertaining not to the true, the just, or the beautiful, etc., but to the efficient: a technical 'move is 'good' when it does better and expends less energy than another" (44). In economic terms, the main premise of the discourse of efficiency is that goods and services, which now includes "content" (information) transported over the Internet, must travel from producers to consumers ever more quickly and smoothly, with minimal mediation or middlemen interference. Furthermore, the media of commerce, including e-commerce, are assumed to be politically neutral; that is, computers and networks are simply tools. The more streamlined and "intuitive" the exchange process, the better. In advocating this system, Bill Gates has coined the term "friction-free capitalism" to refer to an ideal market condition in which every buyer knows every seller's price and every seller knows what every buyer is willing to pay (157). Gates looks forward to "a new world of low-friction, low-overhead capitalism, in which market information will be plentiful and transaction costs low. It will be a shopper's heaven" (158). The main problem with this vision is that it totalizes society under the ideology of consumerism. The controlling metaphor for society becomes the marketplace, and any person or any institution that refuses to conform to consumerism is treated as an anomaly and then simply ignored, which amounts to a de facto silencing. It is not uncommon to hear

schools and universities spoken of as marketplaces, which reduces teachers to the status of vendors. Thus, a major challenge faced by feminists committed to using technology in the classroom is to *dis-articulate* technology, and education itself, from consumerism and the discourse of efficiency.

Consumerism needs to be countered by *critical technological literacy*. According to Cynthia Selfe, technological literacy, which is the foundation for *critical* technological literacy, refers to "the complex set of socially and culturally situated values, practices, and skills involved in operating linguistically within the context of electronic environments, including reading, writing, and communicating." The next step, critical technological literacy, "suggests a reflective awareness of these social and cultural phenomena." Critical technological literacy, then, "suggests a political agenda" (148). Referring explicitly to consumerism, Selfe goes on to claim that English "teachers need to recognize that they can no longer simply educate students to become technology consumers without also helping them to learn how to think critically about technology and the social issues surrounding its use" (152). Critical technological literacy involves an interrogation of the discourse of efficiency, which is directly linked to the ideology of scientific-democratic progress. Selfe refers to the "ideological equation of *science + technology = progress*." And beyond this equation lie two more: "*technology + democracy (+ capitalism) = progress* and *technology + education = progress*" (116). Such equations are dangerous precisely because they are simple and seductive. But feminists and others committed to social reform and equity must complicate and problematize these easy equations.

A consumer society, ideally, functions as a self-regulating system or machine, and anything that impedes the efficient flow of goods and services is treated as friction or noise in the system. Efficiency becomes an end in itself, a self-evident good. Efficiency is also directly related to standardization and simplicity. Hence, when Gates claims that the future information highway "will simplify and standardize shopping" (159), the tacit assumption, or warrant, is that simplicity and standardization are good. Within this framework the student or scholar is positioned as a consumer of online content, as well as a consumer of the latest computer technology, rather than an engaged citizen within a democracy. This vision of democracy focuses almost exclusively on rights (above all, the right to consume) rather than encouraging a dynamic interplay of rights and responsibility and, therefore, produces politically disengaged, easily manipulated consumers. As Pratt argues, "Many of those who govern us display, openly, their interest in a quiescent, ignorant, manipulable electorate. Even as an ideal, the concept of an enlightened citizenry seems to have disappeared from the national imagination" (594). We might say that the enlightened citizenry has been erased from the national imagination just like the traveler has been erased from the map. But for pedagogy, the most salient consequence of consumerism, aside from creating addiction to the latest technology, is that it encourages students to become passive consumers of information, or content, as opposed to active participants in the classroom. Students ought to feel a responsibility to participate in the social construction of knowledge, as opposed to simply exercising their right to education/information. When students begin to express their own agendas and take

charge of their own educations, they immediately transform classrooms and universities from places to spaces.

Inasmuch as contemporary compositionists and their students have not created the first-year English requirement or department, they are in the position of users, or consumers, of what they have not produced. As de Certeau states, in spaces "imposed knowledge and symbolisms become objects manipulated by practitioners who have not produced them" (32). Such practitioners may be given to subversion of *a priori* designs or standards—a fact especially true for graduate teaching assistants, who are not yet fully identified with academe and, therefore, may choose to operate tactically within "foreign territory" (de Certeau 37). Feminists may also never fully identify with the university, or at least as long as it remains a patriarchal institution; hence, we might think of feminists as resident aliens in academe.[5] For, as Luke argued in 1999, "The hierarchical structure of masculinist models of doing business in the academy—whether in research, administration, teaching, funding and grant regimes, or publishing—remains virtually unchanged despite some 25 years of feminist attempts at intervention" (4).

In discussing the transformation of places to spaces, de Certeau describes how a

> North African living in Paris [. . .] insinuates *into* the system imposed on him by the construction of a low-income housing development or of the French language the ways of 'dwelling' (in a house or a language) peculiar to his native Kabylia. He [. . .] creates for himself a space in which he can find *ways of using* the

[5] The term "the university" is meant to denote an historically and discursively constructed idea or institution, as distinguished from a particular university.

> constraining order of the place or of the language. Without leaving the place where he has no choice but to live and which lays down the law for him, he establishes within it a degree of *plurality* and creativity. (30)

This passage is a description of the *mestiza*—i.e., one who practices the "art of being in between" and has "countless ways of 'making do'" (de Certeau 29, 30). Similarly, first-year composition has no choice but to be in the university, and the "laws" of Western higher education predate composition's entry into the system, but the *mestiza* compositionist can operate creatively and subversively within that institutional context, introducing *creative noise* into the self-regulating system. By working tactically within fault lines or seams, compositionists may even contribute to the system's deconstruction or transformation.

My point, then, arguing from analogy, is that compositionists committed to feminism and innovative uses of technology may practice different, alien customs, and in this way operate tactically within the system of higher education, changing the system from within rather than simply rejecting it—inasmuch as rejecting the system would be self-defeating. In de Certeau's words, we may make use of "tactical ruses and surprises: clever tricks of the 'weak' within the order established by the strong" (40). Again, the tactical, creative use of commodities produced by others is fundamental to contact zones.

Recalling a previous discussion, we can encourage student writers to compose autoethnographic texts. For, as Diana M.A. Relke writes, "[I]t's not so much the content of what we teach, but rather, what [students] make of it—make out of it—that counts as knowledge." In other words, students can situate their own texts within the context of

their own lives, as opposed to writing from an anonymous perspective or reflecting in *their* writing their instructor's ideals. For instance, if I introduce students to feminist theory, I may assume that they will use that theory to articulate feminist readings of texts; however, Pratt argues that writers take the tools offered by authority figures and use them selectively. Thus, while I may represent these students as budding feminists, they may represent *themselves* very differently—even while using the raw material of feminist theory. Autoethnographic texts "involve a selective collaboration with and appropriation of idioms of the metropolis or the conqueror. These are merged or infiltrated to varying degrees with indigenous idioms to create self-representations intended to intervene in metropolitan modes of understanding" (Pratt 585). Here "metropolitan" may be read as *academic*.

Pratt's discussion of autoethnography and Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala *The First New Chronicle and Good Government* also raises interesting issues with respect to audience. As Pratt writes, "Autoethnographic works are often addressed to both metropolitan audiences and the speaker's own community. Their reception is thus highly indeterminate" (585-86). A student text written for the instructor as well as the student's peers is, therefore, likely to have "highly indeterminate" reception; there may be complex layers of coding, although this kind of sophistication is more likely to appear in orally presented texts. Furthermore, we should not expect such texts to display a consistent voice or tone, or, in other words, to be written from a stable subject position, particularly when the newer media are used. For, as I've argued in previous chapters, multimedia, hypertextual technologies tend to work against stable, unified subject positions.

Hypertext may encourage students take up multiple subject positions; that is to say, promiscuous wreating may promote fluid, mobile subject positionings. In promiscuous wreating, the "alliance" between wreater and text is typically short-lived; it is fleeting like the tactical social or political alliances that, I would argue, third-wave feminists are particularly given to.

In short, rhetoric-composition scholars have an obligation to seriously rethink the traditional essay in the light of new technologies. Nedra Reynolds argues,

> We need to offer students more and greater means of resistance to the thesis-driven essay, rigidly structured paragraphing, and the reductive emphasis on coherence and clarity that still determine so much of academic writing and the service-course ideology of composition programs. For composition we need to rethink radically the forms of writing we find acceptable. (71)

As mentioned earlier, this kind or rethinking may lead to a "breakdown of the rigid boundaries that separate life and politics inside and outside the academy" (Reynolds 71). Thus, hypertext has the potential to change readers and writers, along with composition pedagogy and the university itself. For instance, a read-write interface works against the passive consumption of texts. Just as we hope students feel a responsibility to participate in class discussions, readers may begin to feel a responsibility to write in the texts they read—both figuratively and literally.

The promotion of multiple, fluid subject positioning relates to the fact that consumerism relies heavily on stable subject positions in the form of consumer profiles, i.e., "compilations of identifying information, preference information, purchasing habits,

and other information related to a particular consumer" (Federal Trade Commission). Consumer profiles are maps, and noise or friction in the consumerist system is caused by unstable subject positions, or subjects that move round nomadically on a map. Consumer profiles, moreover, position people as individual buyers; yet a feminist theorization of hypertext should foreground collaboration—i.e., working with others and working with the technology—as opposed to venturing out alone on a "heroic" consumerist quest. Furthermore, collaborative alliances that are multiple and fleeting, or promiscuous, may defeat the mapping efforts of consumer profilers. Short-term alliances may be considered temporary contracts, and Lyotard showed some prescience when he claimed in 1979 that "the temporary contract is in practice supplanting permanent institutions in the professional, emotional, sexual, cultural, family, and international domains, as well as in political affairs" (66).

The positioning of the subject on the social checkerboard begins early. According to Lyotard, "Even before he is born, if only by virtue of the name he is given, the human child is already positioned as the referent in the story recounted by those around him, in relation to which he will inevitably chart his course" (15). Yet such positioning is often constraining and even painful. Margaret Morrison speaks of her own history of depression as a

> dis-ease [. . .] precisely that precariousness and fluidity of subject positioning the masculinist signifying economy (that trap of a binary system) finds so dangerous to its rigidly potent efficiency. [. . .] Polymorphing in reading and writing, the 'I'

may be slipping messily among and exceeding the voyeuristic-exhibitionistic, public-private, inner-outer . . . (those ubiquitous, ridiculous poles!). (206-07).

Maps are powerless to contain "the excess polymorphing beyond the bounds of the subject as positioned" (Morrison 207). Rhizomes are polymorphous, and they cannot be contained by maps.

One example of the strategy to inscribe or enforce stable subject positions is through a firm gender binary, a process which may be witnessed everywhere in popular American culture. Gender polarization, or widening the gap between normative femininity and masculinity, serves to reduce uncertainty and ambiguity. The masculinist social order has little tolerance for gender confusion or androgyny. With respect to consumerism, a person who straddles or smudges the border between masculinity and femininity is difficult to profile; s/he is a moving target. The same may be said for an individual who reads the Web promiscuously, rather than always visiting the same sites. As advertising moves online it becomes more narrowly focused or targeted, relying on stable, predictable buying habits. In fact, "Targeted advertising is the Holy Grail of the online advertising industry" (Meland, unpaginated), and it is premised on the reduction of uncertainty. Certainty, moreover, is utopian, for its ultimate goal is to predict the future. Literary hypertext, however, plays with uncertainty, using it creatively. Uncertainty, in other words, may serve as a kairotic, tactical opportunity, inasmuch as it frustrates the striating forces of consumerist culture.

Composition studies entails more than teaching students how to write; it has to do with helping students to construct their own understanding of the social and cultural contexts in which they live, or, in other words, to create situated knowledge. Hence, I endorse Jarratt's vision of "composition courses whose instructors help their students to locate personal experiences in historical and social contexts" ("Feminism" 121). A potential benefit to students of a feminist composition pedagogy is an enhanced awareness of one's multiple subject positionings, and such awareness is important because one's writing always arises from these subject positions.

Under contemporary capitalism, information is supposed to reduce uncertainty.[6] In the words of Alan Greenspan, "The essential contribution of information technology is the expansion of knowledge and its obverse, the reduction in uncertainty" (qtd. in Ingram). In direct opposition to this agenda, which is simultaneously expansionist and reductionist, multiple, fluid subject positions heighten uncertainty. Borderlands, insofar as they are ambiguous, also create and sustain uncertainty. In this sense, Borderlands are more real than the artificial systems of economics. Lyotard, citing evidence from chemistry and mathematics, states, "It is not true that uncertainty (lack of control) decreases as accuracy goes up: it goes up as well" (56). Thus, if we equate accuracy with expansion of knowledge, Greenspan is wrong. The problem with the model of technical efficiency, or performativity, is that "since performativity is defined by an input/output

[6] Claude Shannon and Warren Weaver, in *A Mathematical Theory of Communication* (Urbana: U of Illinois P, 1949), defined information as the reduction of uncertainty.

ratio, there is a presupposition that the system into which the input is entered is stable" (Lyotard 54). Human subjectivity, however, is unstable. In other words, the self, insofar as it is a site of articulation, is a space rather than a place. For, as de Certeau claims, a place "implies an indication of stability" (117).

In the rhetoric of expansion and conquest, information can easily be treated as territory. As Lyotard wrote in 1979 (English translation 1984), "It is conceivable that the nation-states will one day fight for control of information, just as in the past they battled for control of territory" (5). Expansion and reduction, insofar as the former is coded positive and the latter is coded negative, may also be treated as masculinist metaphors. The taking over of space is a masculinist ideal—expanding one's territory or province, assimilating or conquering others along the way. Brian Ponger discusses "the particularly masculine desire for the territorialization of space: it is the desire to conquer and protectively enclose space, the desire to make connections according to the laws of spatial domination. [. . .] Loss of the control of space is the death of masculinity" (72). The discourse of "expanding global markets" is, therefore, thoroughly masculinist.

In 1991, Bolter claimed that Western culture had entered "the late age of print" (3). While this phrase has become something of a mantra over the last decade, predications of the imminent demise of print seem to participate in the rhetoric of imperialism or colonialism. Gilbert, for instance, observes that "Often, the rhetoric of netting reminds one of colonial narrative-stories of exploration, expansion, acquisition and cooptation" (258). In this narrative, old ways of life are replaced/erased by the ways of the colonizer. Upon entering the ancient territory of writing, the *e-colonizer* sets about replacing the

old, inefficient ways with a sleek, seamless electronic narrative. This rhetoric is founded on an either/or paradigm; however, either/or rhetorics serve little purpose in a postmodern age. There is no reason we cannot have both e-text and print; we can have both traditional, linear narratives printed on paper or written in pixels and subversive, multilinear hypertexts. Compositionists need to embrace multiple discourses and technologies, rather than attempting to conquer of the old ways by the "new and improved."

A parallel to the colonialist rhetoric of hypertext theory can be found in the use of writing within the context of primary oral cultures. Linda Tuhiwai Smith argues that the writing of the West (i.e., conventional, unilinear text) has served the interests of empiricism, positivism, and the colonial rhetoric of control (35-36).[7] Writing, insofar as it establishes a sense of permanence, has a prestige or authority (ethos) denied to speech. The privileging of writing over speech is the defining feature of the "scriptural economy" (de Certeau 131-39):

> In very diverse ways, orality is defined by (or as) that from which a 'legitimate' practice—whether in science, politics, or the classroom, etc.—must differentiate itself. The 'oral' is that which does not contribute to progress; reciprocally, the 'scriptural' is that which separates itself from the magical world of voices and

[7] By necessity, this dissertation follows the format of the conventional, unilinear text; however, like many others, I have tried to work against the limitations of this format by adding nonlinear elements, such footnotes, graphics, and appendices. I have also written much of this text in the first-person. But most significantly, I have used the Storyspace read-write interface to directly engaged with the five hypertexts, and I've given copies of these hypertexts to my dissertation committee.

> tradition. [. . .] Thus one can read above the portals of modernity such inscriptions as 'Here, to work is to write,' or 'Here only what is written is understood.' Such is the internal law of that which has constituted itself as 'Western' (de Certeau, 134).

Words that are left to float in the air, rather than being nailed down on paper, are easily ignored by literate people—a fact with serious implications for the oral promises exchanged (or oral contracts made) between colonizers and indigenous peoples.[8] Hence, colonizers have a reputation, at least in Hollywood, for speaking with "forked tongue." My point, though, in terms of rhetorical theory, is that ethos is inextricable linked to dominant communication media.

Just as colonial rhetoric subordinates orality to literacy, electronic text is construed by its critics as ephemeral and untrustworthy as compared to ink on a page.[9] Not only does hypertext exist in an electronic medium, which immediately places its authority in doubt, but the narrative syntax, which privileges parataxis, is far different from that of conventional print text.

I argued in a previous chapter that hypertext may be construed as a "guilty" text. Closely related to this line of argument is the notion of the scapegoat. According to Burke, the scapegoat is the

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[8] Plato's argument against writing in the *Phaedrus* might be interpreting as an expression of anxiety about the fate of the spoken word in a literate society. For instance, he might have been concerned about the status of oral contracts.

[9] Sven Birkerts' general thesis in *The Gutenberg Elegies* (New York: Fawcett Columbine, 1994) that in that electronic text is less trustworthy than print text.

> representative or vessel of certain unwanted evils. The vessel, delegated to the role of sacrifice, must obviously be worthy of sacrifice. A few basic strategies for making him so may be listed: (1) He may be made worthy legalistically (i.e., by making him an offender against legal or moral justice, so that he 'deserves' what he gets). (2) We may make him worthy by leading towards sacrifice fatalistically [. . .]. (3) We may make him worthy of a subtle kind of poetic justice, in making the sacrificial vessel too good for this world, hence of the highest value, hence the most perfect sacrifice. (*Philosophy of Literary Form* 40)

Now, in applying Burke's scapegoat theory to hypertext and composition pedagogy, I am most interested in the first strategy—i.e., legalistic scapegoating. When we condemn students for breaking the rules of academic writing and condemn hypertext for breaking the rules of linear organization, as well as when we judge women guilty of violating all sorts of hegemonic masculine standards, we are using the legalistic scapegoating strategy. In other words, we are saying that hypertext is not following the rules of the territory (or place) of print and students are not following the rules of the university as a place. Places are essentially static, but they cannot resist dynamic forces indefinitely. Neither conventional, unilinear text nor the university, which for centuries has used that text as its life blood, can contain hypertext. Of course, the university might assimilate hypertext to the discourse of efficiency, but literary hypertext might frustrate this effort to at least some extent.

If a student puts her feet on a desk or in some other way breaks the rules of the traditional classroom, she transforms a place into a space. Similarly, when one begins

using a technology in innovated ways, a place is transformed into a space. A space is a used, or lived-in, place. But when students transform a classroom place into a space, they risk being judged guilty. Intrepid students, then, are like "heroes who transgress frontiers and who, guilty of an offense against the law of the place, best provide its restoration with their tombs" (de Certeau 118). Such is the function of narrative. As de Certeau goes on to write, "Stories thus carry out a labor that constantly transforms places into spaces and spaces into places" (118).

The point I wish to emphasize is that scapegoating creates the illusion of ideological innocence, or purity of motives, on the part of composition teachers and university administrators. We might compare Burke's description of gangster stories and hardboiled fiction, where "various forms of the disreputable character 'die that we may live'" (47). Thus, in characterizing literary hypertext as chaotic, incoherent, irrational, or even disreputable, we tend not to notice that, adapting Burke's words, we are "killing" the hypertext (i.e., the other) so that conventional text may live, or have life more fully. Similarly, in judging students guilty of violating the rules of academic writing, our students "die"—in a spiritual or cultural sense—so that we, who are deeply invested in the place of the print text, may live. It is also noteworthy that when our students condemn hypertext for its chaos or incoherence, they are simply doing what English teachers have always taught them to do.

With respect to pedagogy in general, we may judge our students guilty of being undisciplined, lazy, unmotivated, or even dishonest—traits which have historically been applied to colonized peoples. We might assume that these characterizations or value

judgments have nothing to do with ourselves or the politics of higher education, which is thoroughly raced, classed, and gendered. Such judgments, then, would be decontextualized. Our students are not intrinsically unmotivated or dishonest or undisciplined; they are only judged so in terms of our received standards.

Burke makes a further distinction between two types of scapegoating: "explicit ritual" and "pseudoscientific objectivity":

> [In] explicit ritual, the vessel is formally appointed; but in its concealed pseudoscientific variants, where one's vices are simply projected upon the scapegoat, and taken literally to be an objective, [. . .] intrinsic attribute of the scapegoat (a scientific fact about the scapegoat's true nature), there is less incentive to discounting. A ritualistic scapegoat is felt both to have and not to have the character formally delegated to it—but a pseudoscientific scapegoat, endowed by projection without an explicit avowal of the process, is felt purely and simply to have the assigned character. (45-46).

In pseudoscientific scapegoating, then, we refuse to admit consubstantiality with the other. The guilt or sin of the other is treated an as intrinsic attribute of the other, rather than a product of our own, often arbitrary legalistic standards. Moreover, inasmuch as both conventional text and hypertext are constituted by the acts of reading and writing, or, in other words, as long as they are both literate spaces, they are consubstantial. The scapegoating of hypertext, then, may be construed as a projection from conventional text of its unwanted or disowned attributes. Hypertext is conventional text's disowned other, its unruly, promiscuous, indecorous sister.

As academics, we live in the culture of the book—the linear, hierarchical print text. We live in gridded, striated space. Print text is a decidedly standardizing force, and the more adamantly we seek to maintain the standards of tightly crafted, hierarchical, unilinear prose, the more strenuously we will condemn smooth texts such as literary hypertext.

So, as teachers of writing, what are we supposed to do? Throw out all received standards for academic writing and just accept whatever our students happen to produce? Of course not. If this were the case, education itself would be meaningless. Standards, per se, are far from harmful. In fact, standardization is often necessary, such as when mechanical components must work together and be interchangeable. Or consider the value of standardized spelling. Yet, despite the fact that standardization makes life easier and better in innumerable ways, standards can easily ossify and become dysfunctional or oppressive, and in this case they need to be interrogated. For example, we need a standard computer keyboard, but the current standard may not be the best arrangement, considering that it was originally designed to slow down typing on a mechanical typewriter. Thus, with respect to composition pedagogy, my own modest proposal is that we 1) teach students to use hypertext as an invention strategy, as in "storyspacing," 2) assign the composition of single-authored and collaborative hypertexts, and 3) expose students to literary hypertext, including texts written from a feminist perspective. The rationale for these practices is that they may serve to invigorate composition studies or, in other words, to prevent composition studies from lapsing into a complacent rigidity. In the face of rapid technological change, there is a very real danger of falling back on the

old, familiar ways, completely disengaging from the troubling new technologies. But radical, feminist hypertexts might be studied alongside conventional texts. As I've stated before, the goal of feminist hypertext or a feminist theorization of hypertext need not be the replacement of conventional text with hypertext, in the manner of an agonistic, either/or rhetoric. The primary value of a feminist articulation of hypertext, as I see it, is that it throws into relief conventional, dominant literacy technologies. As a marginal, though emergent, genre, literary hypertext represents a privileged standpoint from which to understand conventional textuality.

CHAPTER 6

Tentative Conclusions

The fundamental premise underlying the theorization of hypertext presented in this study is that writing—all modes of writing, not just hypertext—is *gendered*, and a secondary assumption is that all writing is *political*. While it is true that most hypertext theorists have, to varying degrees, touched on gender as it relates to hypertext or rhetoric, in the present study gender has been the central concern. I am most interested in the gendered ways in which we engage with texts as both readers and writers. I have argued for a convergence of the fields of hypertext theory, feminist epistemology, and feminist rhetoric. More specifically, I've argued that the conjunction of hypertext theory and feminist epistemology facilitates a rearticulation of feminist rhetoric. While hypertext has, of course, been at the core of this study, the arguments made and conclusions drawn may apply to a wide variety of texts.

As I have engaged with the five hypertexts considered in this study, my early assumption that conventional texts as well as hypertexts are a unique class of *others* that I can relate to and work with has been confirmed. Texts are but one class of *other* that human beings engage with on a daily basis, and the ways in which we engage with or relate to others are deeply gendered. If we think of masculinity and femininity as unstable points or spectra on a Möbius Strip, the normative masculine approach to others is to treat them as medium sized objects—i.e., things to be explained, controlled, and used. By contrast, the normative feminine approach to others is to treat them as subjects to be

engaged with and understood. From a feminist perspective, it is vital to keep in mind that the *otherness of the other* must be respected. An effective reader cannot impose her or his will on a text or treat it as a blank slate to be written on. I have no desire to nail down, master, or penetrate deeply into texts. I am more interested in the superficial borders and edges of texts—i.e., those places where texts edge up against one another. In other words, I am interested in texts, as well as technologies, as contact zones and borderlands.

The otherness of the text can be respected without taking a distanced, analytical, voyeuristic position. A text may be an other, but it is an other that readers and writers are intimately engaged with; that is, to be reader or writer (or wreater) is to be enmeshed in a web of texts, or a textual multiplicity. Through the extended mind, as discussed by Hayles, the wreater and text come together in a cybernetic feedback loop. Text and wreater get inside, or *inform*, one another.

In exploring hypertext I have departed from conventional practice, which analyzes the differences between conventional text and hypertext as media, by inquiring into the relationships between hypertext and people—specifically, people who read and write literary hypertext. And I have used myself the primary subject of this study; that is to say, I have reflected on my own encounters with literary hypertext. Thus, rather than comparing two different textual media, I have studied my own experiences in reading (and writing myself into) five hypertexts. I maintain, therefore, that an adequate theorization of hypertext must be personal; it must break down the masculinist, Enlightenment-era dichotomies of subject/object, reason/feeling, reader/writer, fact/value, masculine/feminine, and so on.

Moreover, such an engaged approach entails the use of first-person narrative, rather than objectivist analysis, in writing up the "findings" of the study. Feminist hypertext, in other words, is transgressive; it crosses borders and creates new ways of reading and writing; it also takes a fresh look at the analysis/narrative binary. Along with narrative, the emphasis on conversation is important to hypertext theory, and an electronic read-write interface, such as Storyspace, facilitates a shift from classical *oratorical* rhetoric to a more *conversational* mode. Furthermore, these conversations are multiple and multilinear.

I have endeavored to address a significant gap in hypertext scholarship. Literary works, at least in formalist schools of criticism, have often been treated much like other medium sized objects, or located on the same ontological plane as apples, chairs, and billiard balls. This practice has encouraged critics to attempt to know literary works in an objective, "scientific" way. But far from hunting and controlling the text as prey, as discussed by Rushing, I've argued that engaging with a hypertext is more like knowing another person, or at least some type of living organism. I have also used the principle of the rhizome to elucidate the nature of this living organism. Hypertexts are indeterminate, shifting, and resistant to final interpretation. And insofar as they are rhizomatic, human beings are mercurial, shifting, sliding "texts"; we shift identities, or "shape shift," as we move into and out of different contexts. Hence, knowledge and understanding of human beings and hypertexts is always provisional.

As a student of rhetoric, I am primarily interested in the shifting dynamics of writer, reader, text, context—along with the issue of gender. Moreover, the context I am most

concerned with is literary hypertext. The methodology of this study has been premised on the need to counteract the silencing of the reader, which is encouraged by the conventions of print publication, classical (oratorical) rhetoric, and teacher-centered pedagogy. The tradition of classical rhetoric has relied heavily on the binary of the vocal rhetor and the silent audience. Consequently, reading and writing are typically treated as vastly dissimilar activities. But in the course of this study, a vision of feminist rhetoric has emerged that features a blurring of the borders between writer, reader, and text. With the aid of an electronic read-write interface, readers are able to write themselves into texts, thus becoming wreaters. Implicit in the notion of the wreater is that, rather than being silenced by texts, the wreader takes an active role in constructing the texts; that is, the wreater makes meaning as opposed to being passively shaped by texts.

The textual intervention enacted through a read-write hypertext interface, such as Storyspace, is significant on several levels. Perhaps most importantly, this approach directly addresses the modernist bias for studying literary texts in an objectivist, purely analytical manner. With conventional literary texts as well as literary hypertext, a feminist stance calls for active engagement with the text, rather than standing outside the text as a "disinterested" critic or theorist. In other words, the encounter with hypertext is fundamentally different from the conventional relationship between readers and texts because hypertext calls into question mainstream subject/object dichotomies.

When a person is engaged with another entity—whether it be human or nonhuman—there is a cybernetic feedback loop, and this loop engenders self-reflective understanding, as opposed to explanation/analysis. A conversation, then, is essentially a feedback loop,

as the participants modify, extend, or challenge one another's words (or texts). Thus, drawing on the insights of feminist epistemology, I have argued that the knower and the known, as well as the reader and the text, constitute a cybernetic system. Moreover, the hypertext wreater and the text, insofar as they constitute a cybernetic system, share the same space-time, or context. This fact leads to a radical revisioning of the writer-reader-text-context rhetorical schematic, which is so deeply engrained in composition theory.

The conclusions I have drawn here are quite tentative and provisional. I see this study as foundational. I have laid the groundwork for a scholarly project that may occupy me for years to come.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Figures

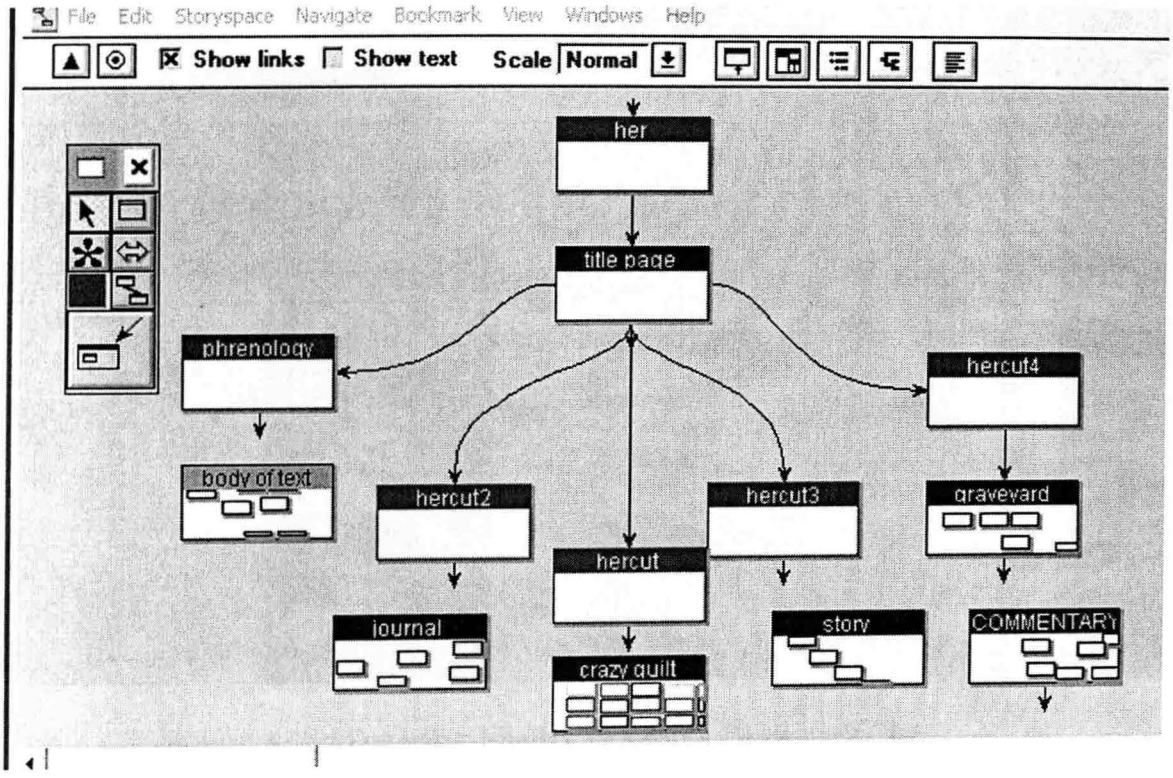

Figure 1.1: Storyspace map view, Shelley Jackson's *Patchwork Girl*

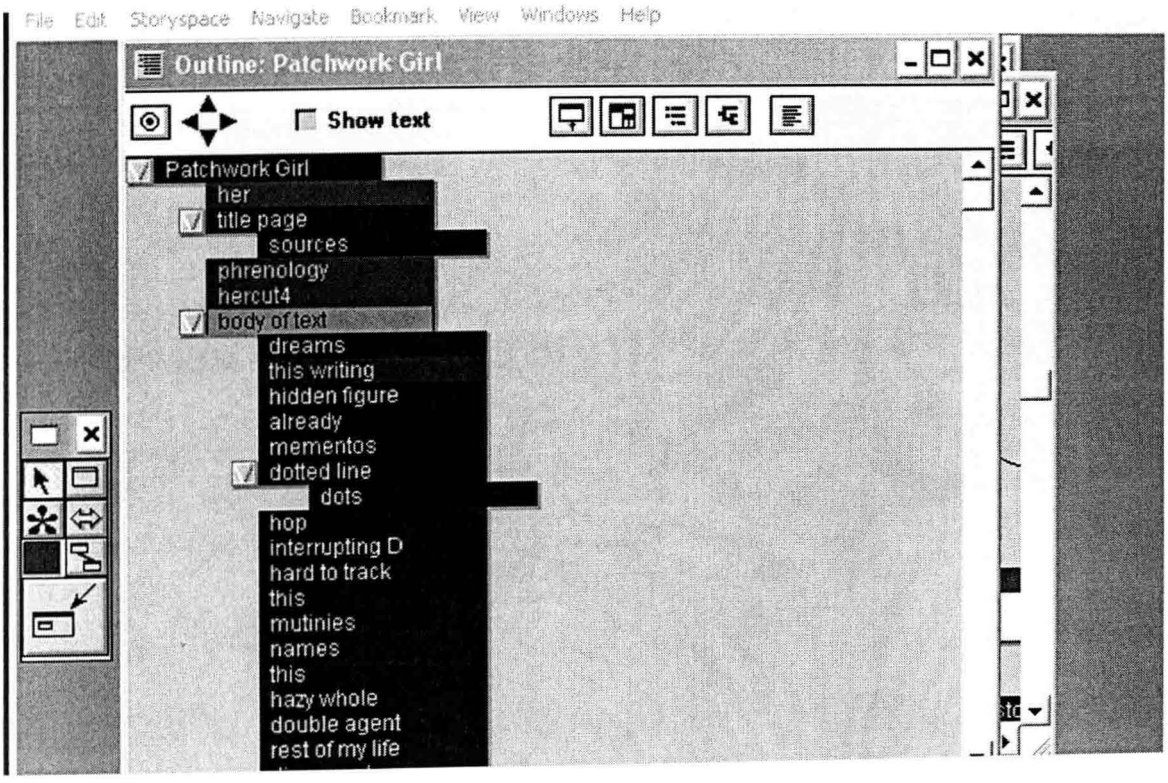

Figure 1.2: Storyspace outline view, Shelley Jackson's *Patchwork Girl*

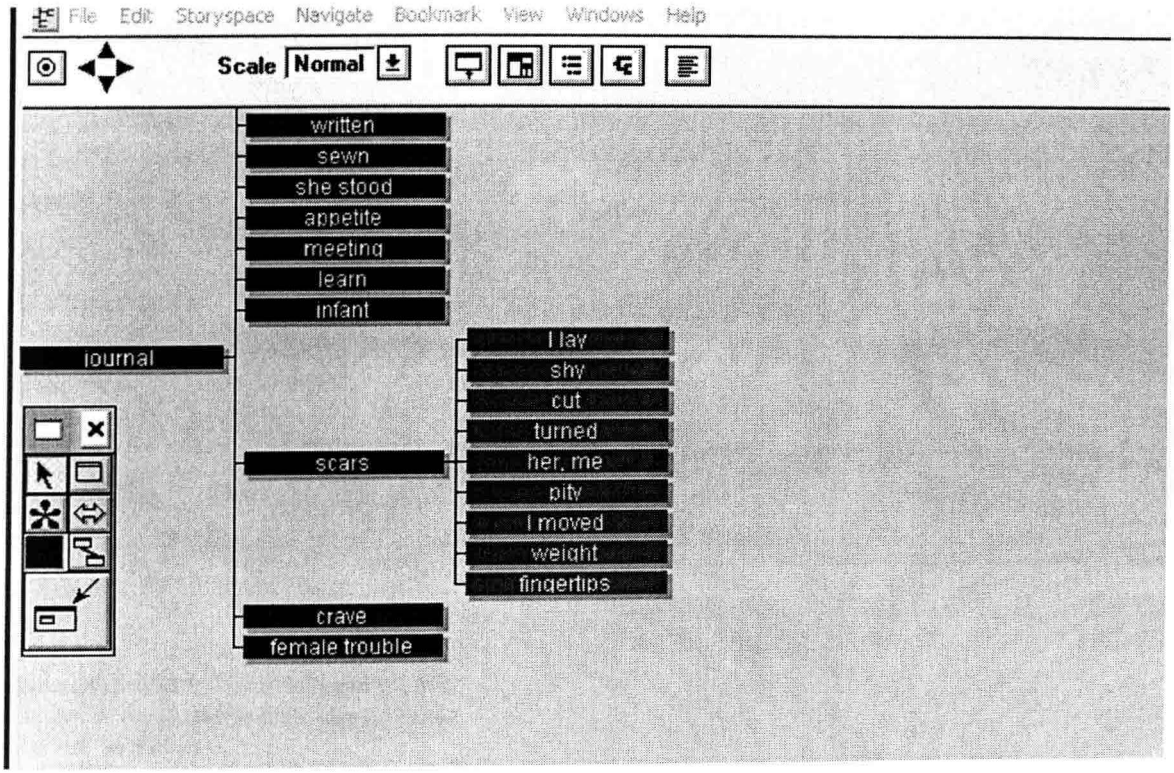

Figure 1.3: Storyspace treemap view, Shelley Jackson's *Patchwork Girl*

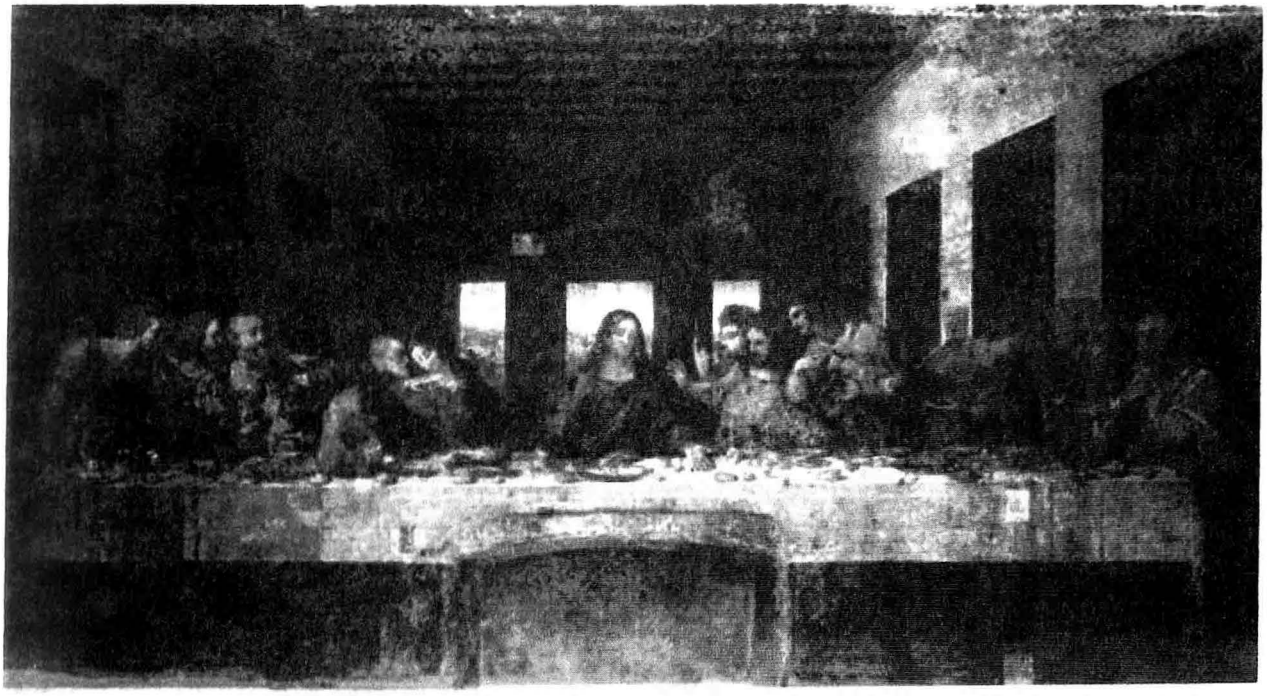

Figure 3.1:
Leonardo da Vinci. *The Last Supper*, 1493
Convent of Santa Maria delle Grazie Milan
Tempera on plaster
460 x 880 cm (15 x 29 ft.)

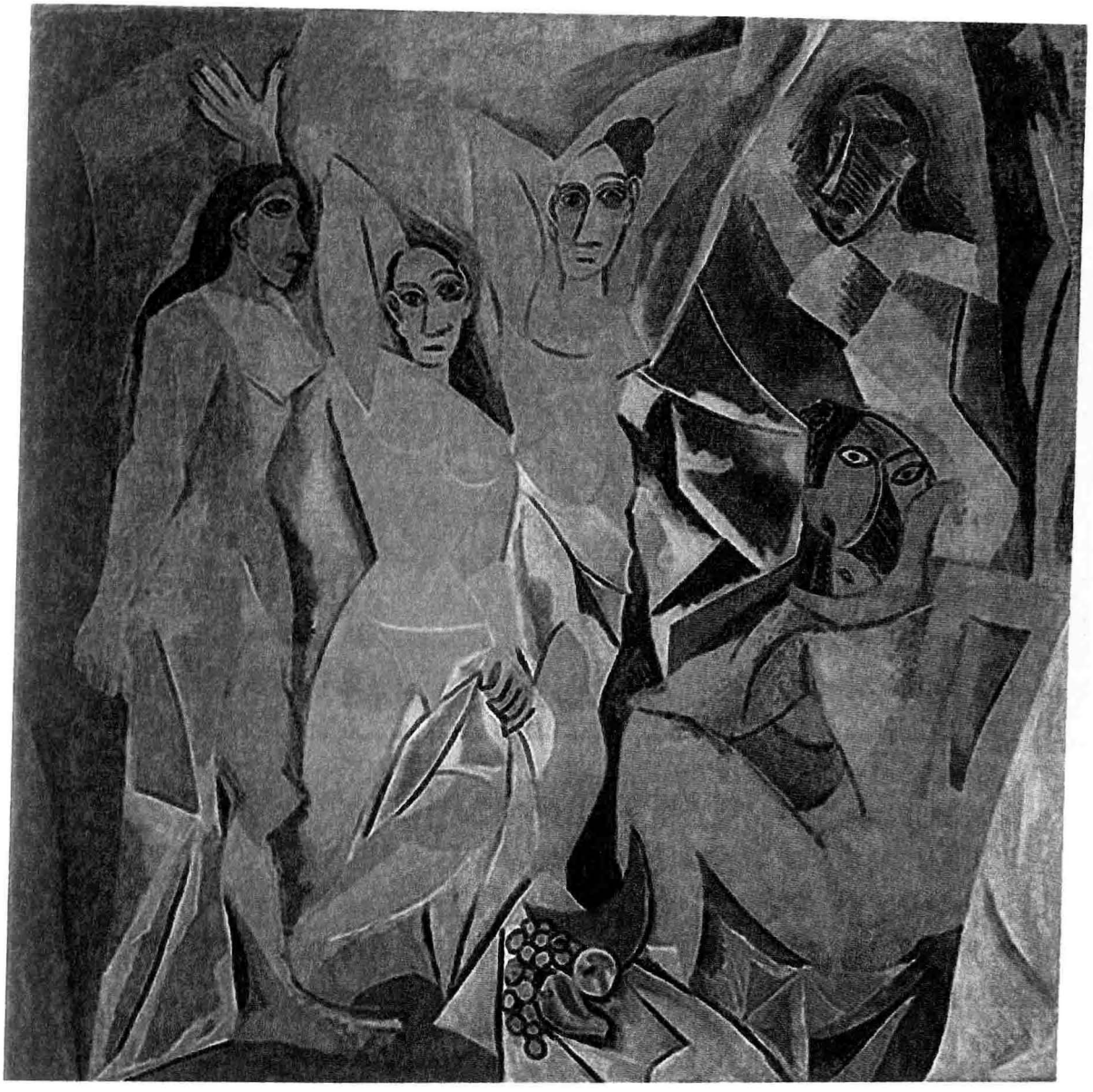

Figure 3.2
Pablo Picasso. *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon.* 1907.
Oil on canvas,8' x 7' 8" (243.9 x 223.7 cm) .
The Museum of Modern Art, New York.
Acquired through the Lillie P. Bliss Bequest.
Photograph ©1997 The Museum of Modern Art, New York.

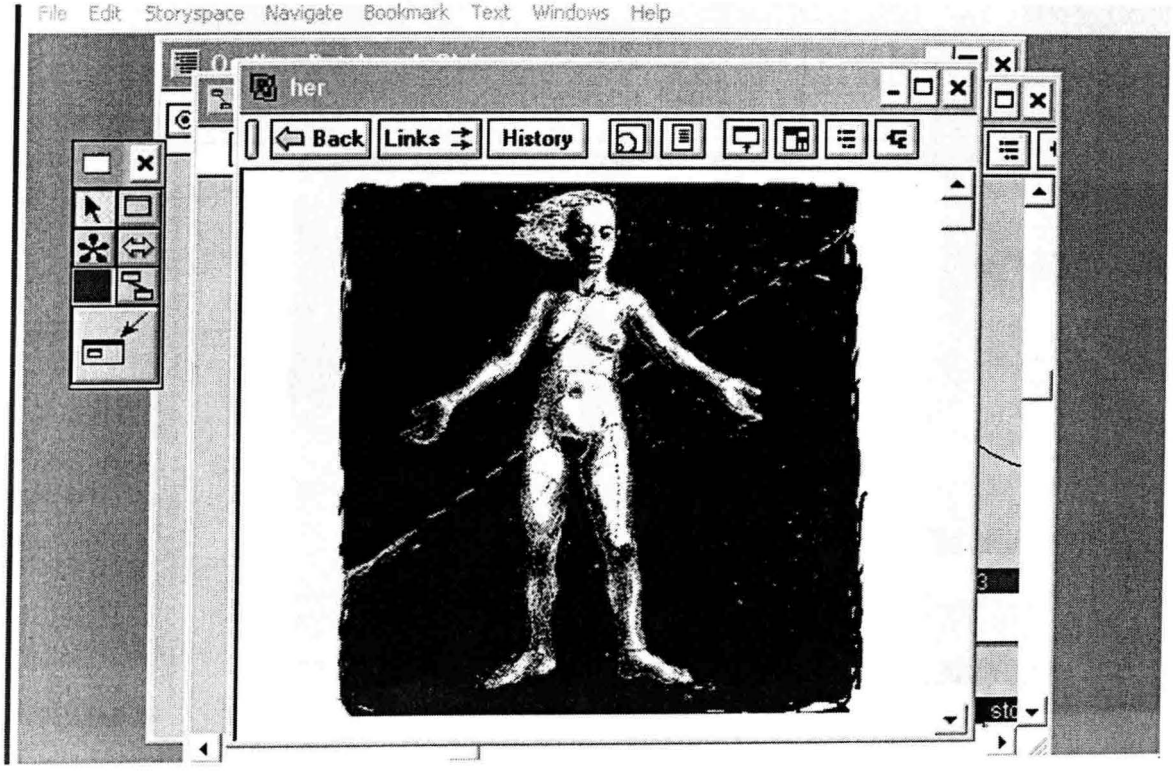

Figure 3.3a: "her" from Shelley Jackson's *Patchwork Girl*

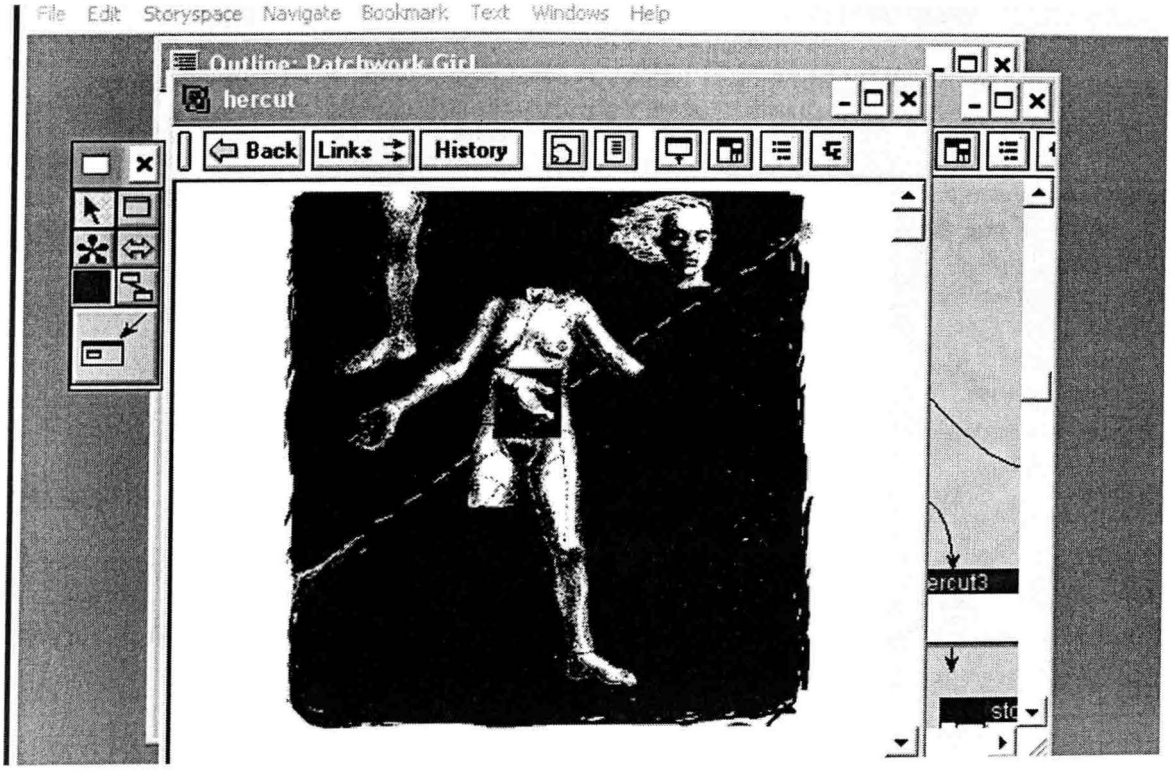

Figure 3.3b: "hercut" from Shelley Jackson's *Patchwork Girl*

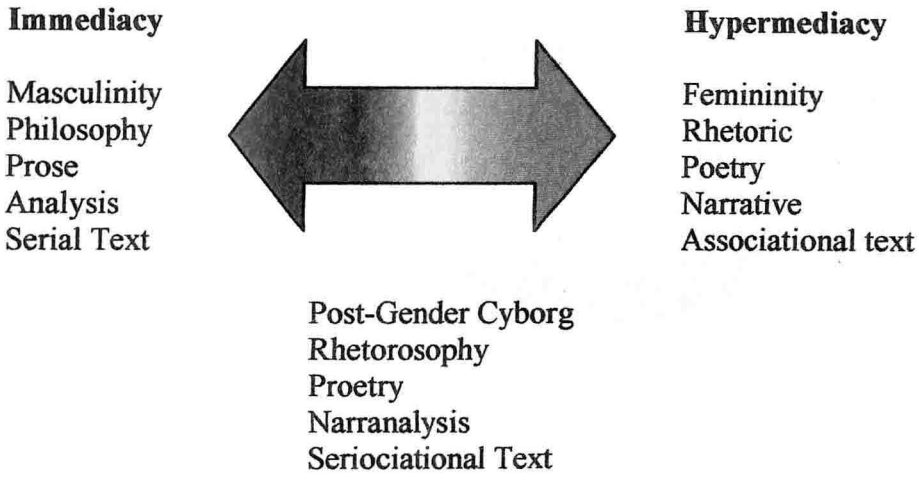

Figure 3.4: Immediacy-Hypermediacy Spectrum

Immediacy
Masculinity
Philosophy
Prose
Analysis
Serial Text

Hypermediacy
Femininity
Rhetoric
Poetry
Narrative
Associational Text

Post-Gender Cyborg
Rhetorosophy
Proetry
Narranalysis
Seriociational Text

Figure 3.5:
The Möbius strip

Möbius strip image borrowed from Alexander Bogomolny, *Möbius Strip.* http://www.cut-the-knot.com/do_you_know/moebius.html.

	Conventional Literary Text	Electronic Literary Hypertext
Work	copyright-protected archetype	copyright-protected computer code
Text	function of interpretation	function of interpretation
Archetype	prototype of the script; does not change if the script is altered	does not exist
Script	readable orthographic marks on a page or screen; exists as a whole from beginning to end; with a electronic interface it is read by scrolling and full-text searches; copy of archetype, but may be written on or over and changed with an electronic interface	readable orthographic marks on a page; has no archetype; is read one lexia at a time with no pre-established sequence; may be written in and changed
Interface	ink, pages, cover, glue, binding; may also be electronic	computer keyboard, mouse, monitor, multiple windows, writing spaces (lexias)

Figure 3.6: Characteristics of conventional literary text and literary hypertext with electronic read-write interface

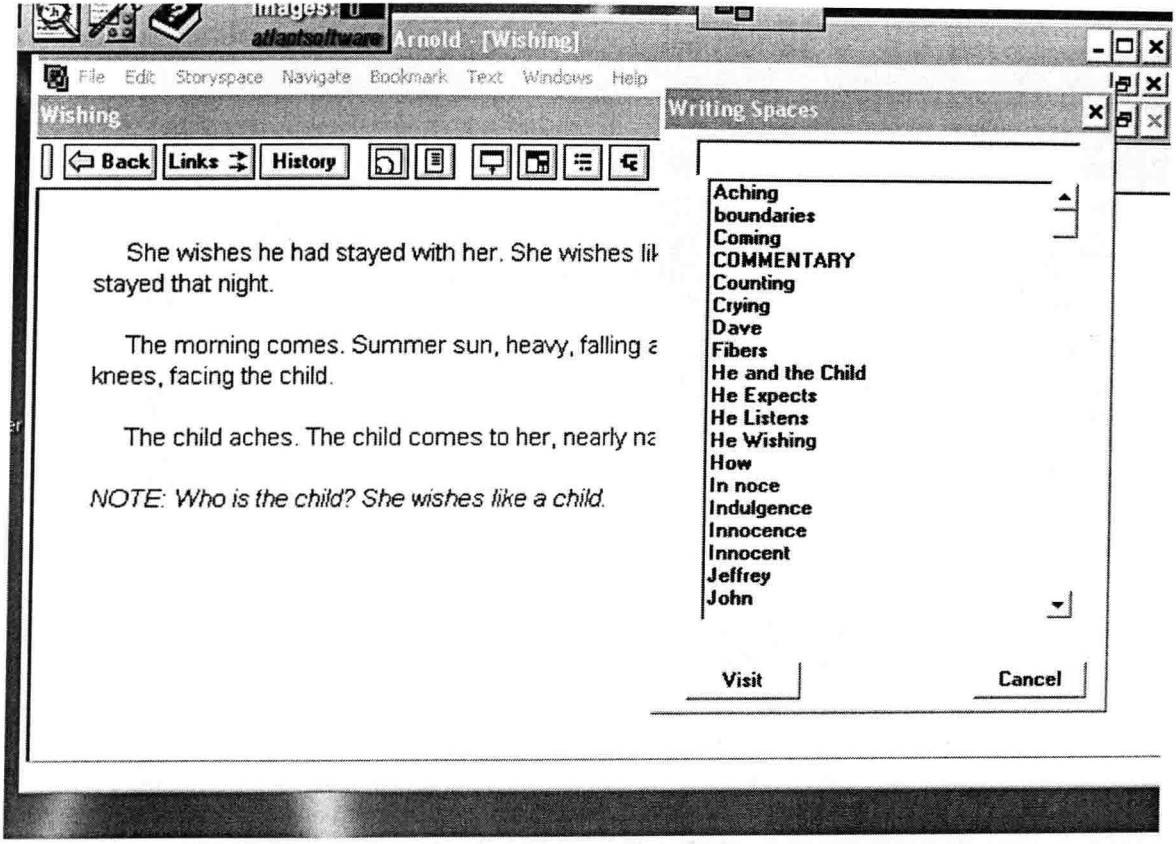

Figure 4.1: Alphabetic list of Storyspace lexias reached by pressing F9.

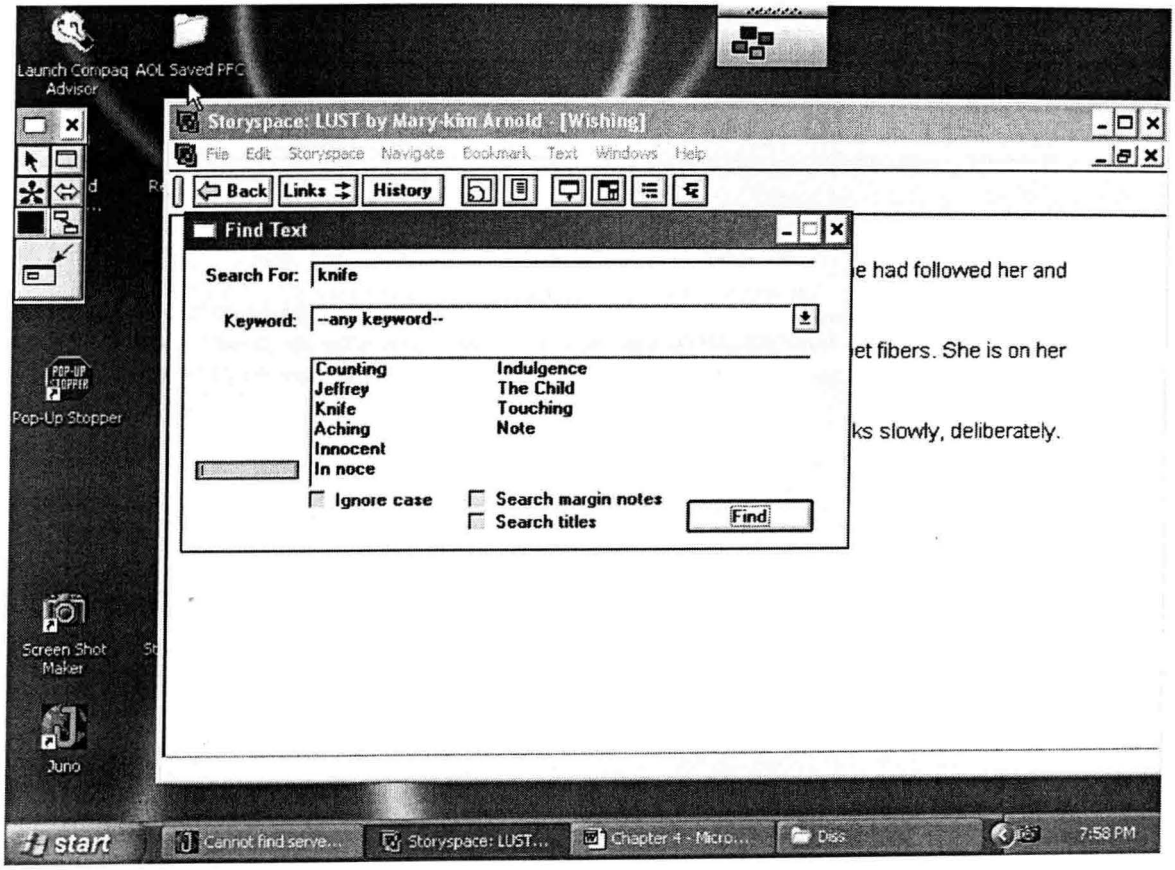

Figure 4.2: Storyspace search tool

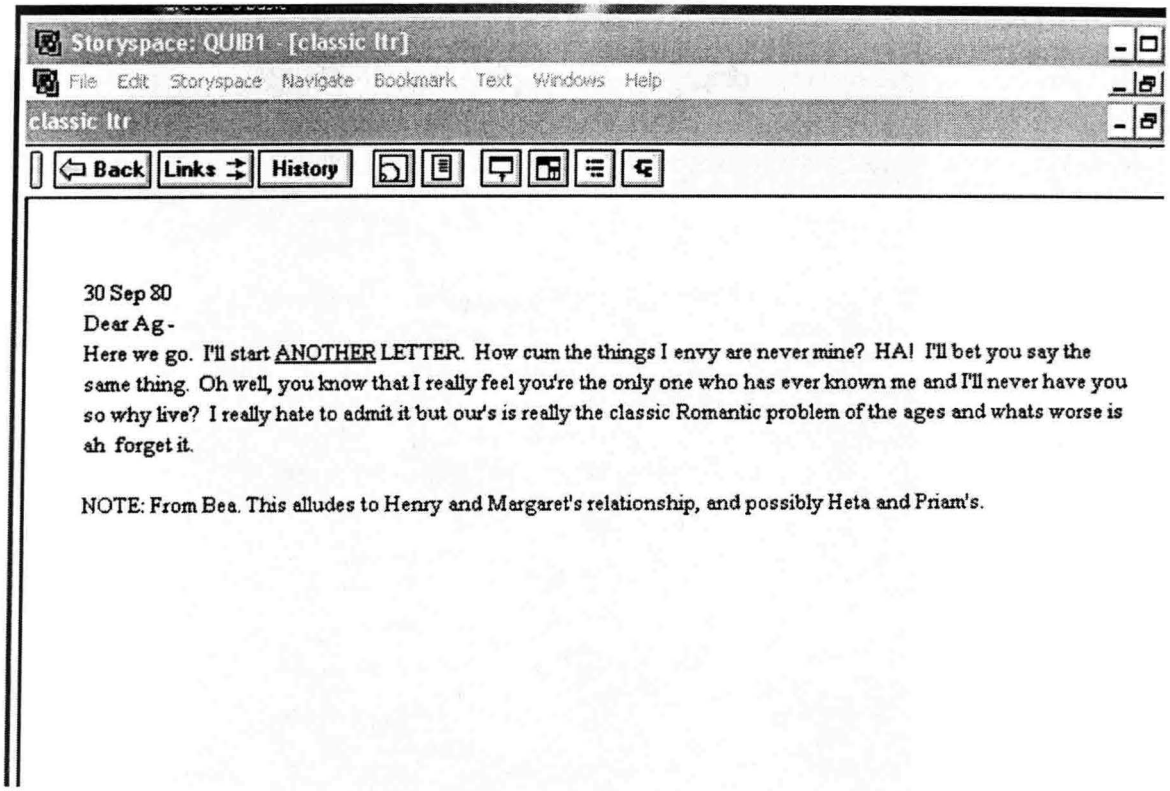

Figure 4.3: Example of a note written into a Storyspace lexia

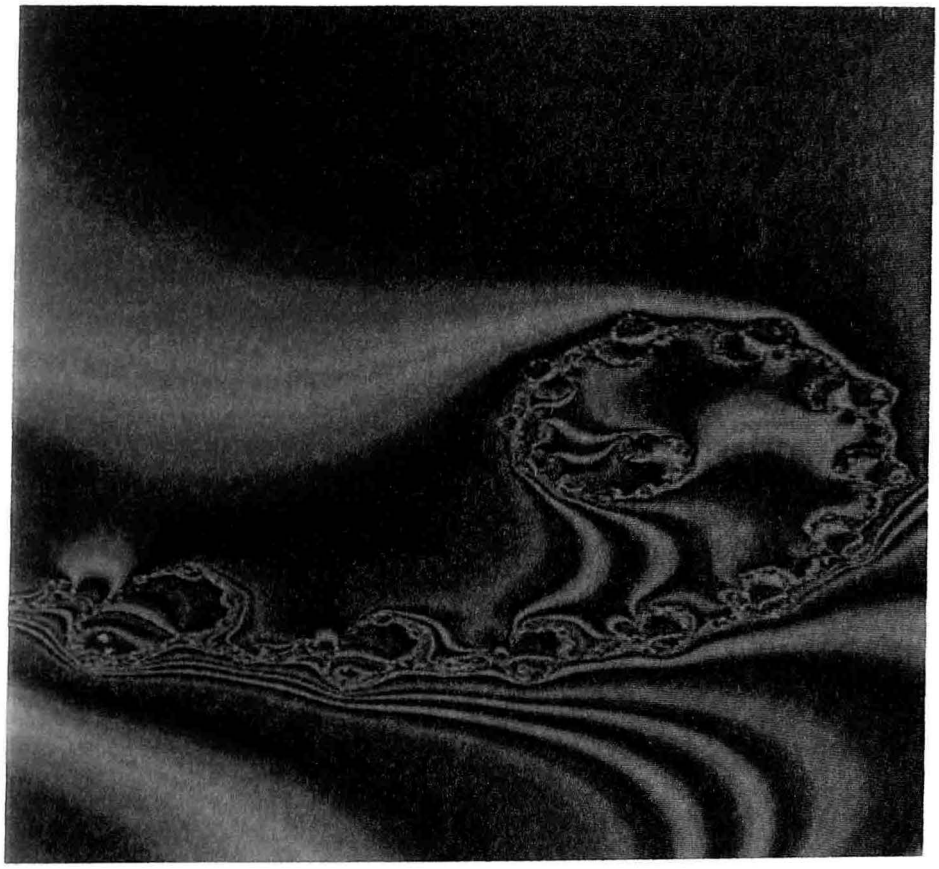

Figure 4.4: Fractal

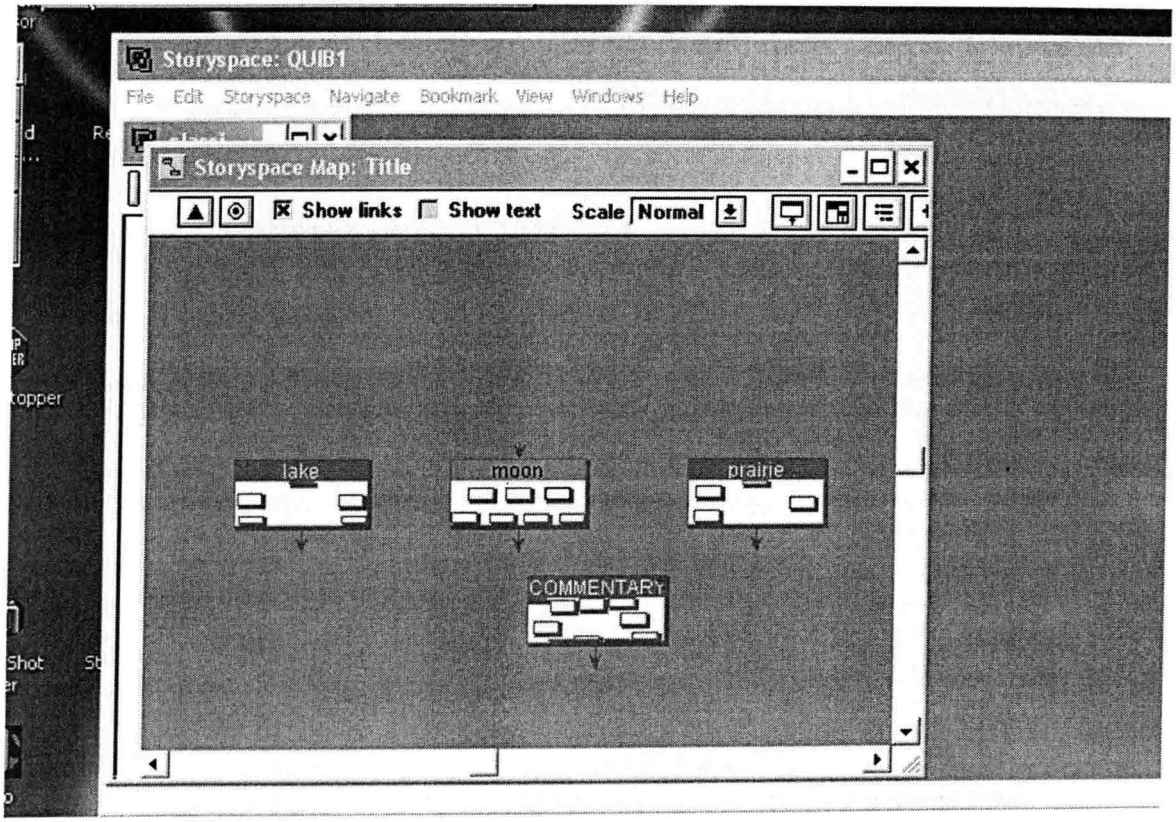

Figure 4.5: *Quibbling* "Title" map view

Heta—artist, Priam's lover, lives part-time on Lake Michigan shore, teaches art part of the year in Cheyenne, married more than once, has (at least) two children
Priam—Heta's lover, ex-priest, art teacher at Catholic boy's school, married Catherine three years after leaving the priesthood, has a temper, Jane/Cora's brother
Catherine—Priam's wife, editor in a publishing house, abused as a child, gave up baby for adoption at age eighteen, does not speak in the narrative, she and Priam are childless, associated with St. Catherine, model for Margaret (at least in part)

Bridget—Heta's daughter, knits sweater for husband Ben
Ben—Heta's son-in-law, Bridget's husband

Gabe—Heta's son. Art student

Hilda—artist, works in office but is stifled by the atmosphere, has a Catholic education but seems to be a pagan (does spiral dance), associated with medieval nun Hildegarde Von Bingen, considers Cy a potential lover
Cy—friend of Hilda, works in a cubicle downstairs from Hilda, tells Hilda he might love her but they are not lovers because he seems to be afraid to fall in love, plays piano and has various artistic talents

Agnes—artist, once worked in a bookstore, friend of Bea, rides motorcycle
Will—26-year-old musician/artist, Agnes's lover

Bea/B.B./Beatrice—friend & correspondent of Agnes, Hilda, and Angela; bisexual, appears to have a daughter and a deceased husband; becomes a nun in middle age and is referred to as Beatrice rather than Bea or B.B, seduces Cora.

Cora/Jane—Priam's sister, young nun, left St. Mary's College, befriended by Heta, seduced by Beatrice, visits Priam at his school to discuss art classes, changes name to Cora when she becomes a nun.

Jake/Jacob—Angela's husband, pilot, not a reader, very good with hands (large hands most prominent feature)
Angela—Jake's wife, friend of Bea, bookish, unworldly, attended convent school; she and Jake are very different, have different tastes, and often misunderstand each other; they live in Kansas

Margaret—15th century nun in hypertext narrative written by Priam, 20 years old, in convent since age 6, from aristocratic family, compared to/modeled on Catherine, also compared to Heta, falls in love with Henry
Henry—chaplain who works harvesting grain with Margaret, falls in love with Margaret, compared to Priam (partially modeled on him)

Werther/Wert—friend of Priam and Heta (obvious allusion to *afternoon, a story*), only mentioned once

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Figure 4.6a: *Quibbling* cast of characters

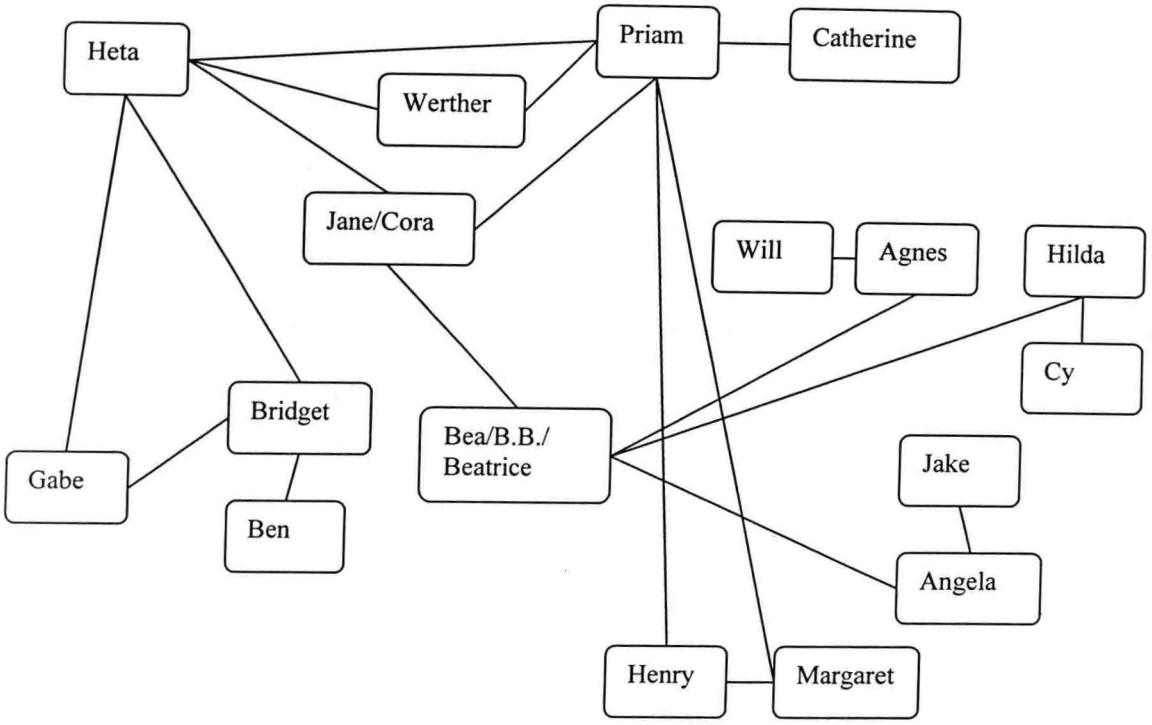

Figure 4.6b: *Quibbling's* cast of characters

Unmanned Narrator—sibling (sister/brother?) of Luke, musician
Luke—brother of narrator, musician
Sherry—Luke's girlfriend, killed after stepping into a busy Detroit street
Juliet/Jules—Luke's girlfriend after Sherry, dies in California auto accident
Aleis—Jule's sister, also killed in the auto accident
Clare—Jule's mother, seriously injured in auto accident that kills her daughters
Jake—Jule's father, Clare's husband, also severely injured in the auto accident
Laura—friend of Sherry (very minor character)

Figure 4.7: Cast of characters for J. Yellowlees Douglas's "I Have Said Nothing."

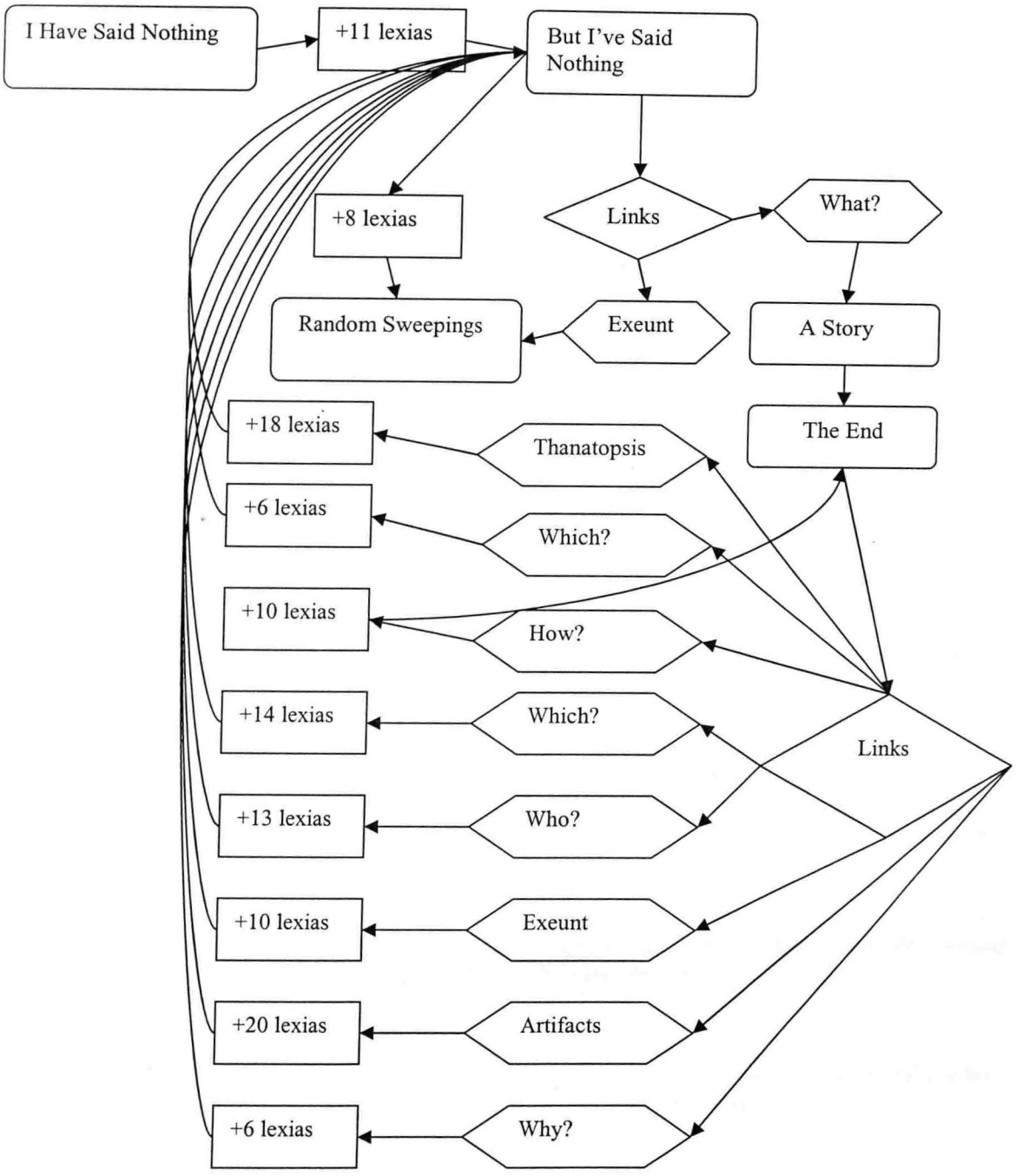

Figure 4.8: Partial flowchart for "I Have Said Nothing"

Appendix B: Exported Storyspace lexias

"LUST," by Mary-kim Arnold

(Lexia titles appear below the dashed lines.)

- - - - -
Prologue

Nearly naked
this summer night
sweet and heavy,
he comes to her.

This night, she follows him,
sweat between them.

They speak of the child
and the summer sun
with words that yield
to the touch.

- - - - -
COMMENTARY

- - - - -
How
How does one read something like this? A text like "Lust" cannot be read; it can only reread, as Joyce states. "Lust" is like a poem, but the reader's purpose is not to explicate it--not explain it, but to read/reread it, and perhaps to rewrite it.

- - - - -
boundaries
It occurs to me that the notion of lust is about the precariousness or permeability of boundaries. When one is experiencing lust, the "normal" sense of self changes; the self overflows its conventional boundaries, inhibitions drop away, and a sense of oneness may be felt with the "object" of one's ardor. Actually, the subject-object split breaks down. The self--the old, unified Enlightenment-- is experienced as unstable while one is in lust.

In this light, then, "Lust" may be read as an experiment in breaking down boundaries, or border-crossing. Hypertext itself may be called "lustful." It might also be called "promiscuous."

- - - - -
Indulgence

She aches from the gravel against her soft flesh. There is blood. She is nearly naked. She falls to her knees. She screams. She picks up the knife. There is blood. He does not speak.

- - - - -
He Wishing

He remembers wishing he had stayed. He walks out of the room, she does not follow this night.

NOTE: He and she seem to be identical. This is the only space where he wishes he had stayed. In the others, it is she who wishes he had stayed.

He tries to speak to the child. He tries to remember how it happened. He tries to remember her face, her flesh. He remembers the tearing. He remembers the blood. He remembers the child.

She had fallen to her knees. He walks out of the room that night. She follows him. This night, she follows him home. She cries like a child.

- - - - -

He Expects

He was nearly naked, except for the baseball cap. He does not speak to her.

He expects her to come to him.

NOTE: Dave wears a baseball cap. This is Dave because Dave is a keyword for this space.

- - - - -

Penis

They are undressed.
He touches.
She screams.

He touches.
She walks away.
He follows her.
She does not speak.

He undresses her.
He does not speak to her.

There is tearing.
There is blood.
She does not speak.

- - - - -

He Listens

He asks her to try to remember.

She tugs at her shirt. He expects her to come like this.

NOTE: A baby would tug at her mother's shirt, wanting to be picked up.

She remembers his face. She is sun warmed. She remembers her soft flesh against the carpet.

She does not remember the child. She does not speak of the child. She speaks slowly, heavy and cold.

He listens, watches her eyes deliberately avoiding him. Watches her lips twitch as she speaks to him. He does not speak. She falls silent.

She clutches her knees.

She walks out of the room.

He does not follow.

- - - - -
In noce

That night, she follows him. Her feet hurt. She picks up the knife, drops to her knees. He talks to her. She watches the knife. He walks out of the room. She follows him.

- - - - -
Innocent

She follows him that night, running into the street, blindly, tears streaming down her cheeks, heaving wildly. She is barefoot, the gravel hard against the soft flesh of her soles.

He looks at her as if he has expected her to follow him like this, naked except for the long cotton shirt.

She picks up the knife, holds it, cold, smooth, heavy, runs the blade across the surface of her skin. She walks toward him. He walks out of the room.

NOTE: She also picks up the baby.

He walks out of the room and she follows him, that night, she follows him as he walks out of the room. She wishes he had stayed. She calls out to him.

He expected her to come to him like that, nearly naked.

- - - - -
Innocence

She follows him that night, running into the street, blindly, tears streaming down her cheeks, heaving wildly. She is barefoot, the gravel hard against the soft flesh of her soles. She runs on, sees him walking. She slows to a brisk walk, trying to catch her breath and tugs at her nightshirt, riding up between her naked thighs. She rakes her fingers through her hair and follows him home.

He looks at her as if he has expected her to follow him like this, naked except for the long cotton shirt.

"For god's sake, sit down."

I don't want to sit.

- - - - -
This Night

This night is sunless. There is sweat between them. They are undressed. The blanket is fraying. Woolen fibers.

NOTE: Memories are fraying. I hypertext might be analogous to a frayed blanket. A blanket is a text/ile.

- - - - -
Remembering

She remembers his face from a long time ago.

NOTE: To remember is to put back together, to reassemble fragments that have fallen apart in time.

- - - - -
The Child Speaks

The child does not remember. The child does not speak. The child is nearly naked, wrapped in woolen blanket, toes flexing.

NOTE: The child does not remember. Maybe only the adults, or the she and he, remember?

Is the child wrapped in memories and/or words. Remembering and speaking are interchangeable here; they are paradigmatic units. Words are remembered/spoken. The child does not speak/remember. The thing is to find paradigmatic units.

To remember is to piece together the frayed fabric of the blanket/text.

- - - - -

Dave

Dave was a guy's guy. He hung with the boys. He wore a baseball cap, only touched her when they were in bed. He called her "dude" and told her that she didn't understand "penis things".

- - - - -

John

John had sand colored hair and eyes of sea. He drove a motorcycle, never wore a helmet. "I am a dyed-in-the-wool Republican", he said.

- - - - -

Jeffrey

Jeffrey had a past. He wrapped it around him like a blanket to keep him warm, to keep him safe from harm. The blanket of steel, less penetrable than the surface of his skin.

I told him it didn't matter to me, I wanted to know all of him, not just the good things, the dark side, too. He told me I had seen one too many movies.

NOTE: The blanket is analogous to the past, something remembered. This blanket/past also keeps them warm. Memories are warm. When she remembers, she is not alone? The blanket is also steel, which is cold rather than warm. The knife is steel.

- - - - -

Michael

Orange juice kisses and summer sun -- she remembers him with a faint longing, wanting nothing like love, nothing like sweat or wind. And when the traces of salty sweet [sweat?] lay on her skin like a blanket of breath and tears, she thinks of him, thinks of him, always thinking of him.

I find it difficult to be alone with you now. I find it difficult to be alone.

NOTE: Orange juice is a reference to morning.

Is she just one person--a kind of Trinity? She is alone with him and just alone. He may not be present at all, except in her memory.

- - - - -

He and the Child

He is gentle with the child. Speaking softly, deliberately, muscled arms embracing soft naked flesh.

- - - - -

Summer

She is aching. She wants to sit down. She sits on the carpet, touches her toes.

He speaks to her, asks her to follow him, to stay with him. Here he is like a child, slowly, deliberately.

There is no mourning. They do not speak. There are no screams. There is no blood. That night, there are no tears. There are blankets of words, the fibers fraying.

The summer sun is sweet and heavy.

NOTE: Blankets of words? It is a blanket of memories, the past. A text.

- - - - -

Coming

She comes to him, undressed. She undresses him. She does not speak to him. She runs the blade along the surface of her skin, cold, smooth. She tears. There is blood.

Then there is morning.

NOTE: The blade seems analogous to Jeffrey's blanket, which would make the blade also analogous to the past and words and memories. To run the blade along the surface of her skin might be simply to think about the past. This is a nice metaphor even Arnold didn't intend it.

- - - - -

The Child

He is a child. NOTE: OK, he is a child, at least here.

He speaks deliberately, following her home, walking to her door.

He is smooth and cold. NOTE: The knife blade is smooth and cold.

She is nearly naked, except for the long cotton shirt.

He looks at her, expecting her to follow him.

He walks away.

She wishes he had stayed.

- - - - -

Aching

He is very civil, cool toward her. He speaks to her as a child, slowly, deliberately. She watches his eyes avoid her consistently. She watches his mouth twitch as he speaks. She blinks hard as if to erase the image. She sees the knife. She touches the knife. She runs it across the surface of her skin. Cold, heavy, smooth. She holds the knife, the soles of her feet stinging from pavement, flexing toes against the carpeting. Lets it drop to the floor, gentle thud as it falls. Watches it fall. Watches it lay on the carpet, glistening, taunting. She kneels to the floor. Lowers her head into her hands. He walks out of the room.

If only you had stayed

NOTE: She appears to be the child here, with her toes flexing, etc.

- - - - -

Nearly Naked

He holds her, nearly naked, wrapped in blankets, toes touching. Fibers touch her flesh. She aches. She is longing for his flesh, sweat, sweet and heavy.

NOTE: The touching signifies contiguity, closeness, borders edging against one another.

She carries the child. She does not speak to him about it. He expects her to come. He comes inside that night. She remembers.

NOTE: She carries the child, and he comes inside her. Maybe he is the child she carries inside her? Coming would not mean ejaculation in his case.

- - - - -

Counting

She counts to ten, breathing slowly and deeply.

She screams. She picks up the knife, thinks of his face. She touches the blade, running it gently across the surface of her skin.

I don't remember anything else.

"Try."

I can't.

NOTE: "Remember" occurs in 14 lexias; so it is important.

- - - - -

Try

She tries to remember how it happened. She remembers his face. She remembers her flesh, his flesh.

NOTE: This may be the same flesh.

She remembers him walking out of the room. She remembers following him. That night, she follows him. She remembers wishing he had stayed.

She remembers almost naked, he does not speak to her.

She remembers cool, smooth, heavy.

She remembers tears.

She remembers screaming.

She remembers morning.

- - - - -

She and the Child

Dyed in the woolen blanket. Fraying ends. Fibers.

NOTE: John is a dyed-in-the-wool Republican; he also has sand-colored hair.

Sand, gravel against soft flesh.

She remembers being put on hold.

She remembers very fast. Very fast wind in the hair of sand.

She remembers cold.

He speaks to her slowly, deliberately.

She remembers the child.

- - - - -

Fibers

He remembers her with longing. He remembers watching too many movies. He remembers her, nearly naked, arms, legs, entwined, and he, too, undressed, soft flesh.

He follows her home. He walks her to the door. Movie-style kiss. Orange juice. Naked thighs.

They do not speak to each other.

Morning.

NOTE: Orange juice and morning are linked.

- - - - -

She

She smells of sun and oranges. She is warm, windblown and smooth. She is nearly naked.

- - - - -

She Wishing

His face is soft like a child's. NOTE: When someone screams they seem to be the child.

She touches his face, running her hands across the surface of his skin. He is undressed.

She undresses him. She does not speak to him. She does not touch him.

He screams. He does not remember morning.

Summer sun and the child.

NOTE: The author seems to be playing with the ambiguity of pronouns.

- - - - -

Crying

He tries to understand, driving very fast very fast. He follows her. She is running, barefoot, gravel eating into soft flesh, soft toes.

There is blood on his carpet. The fibers are soaked in blood.

He tears at the carpet like a child.

He cries like a child.

NOTE: Is the child someone separate, or an aspect of one of the adults?

- - - - -

Knife

She picks up the knife, thinks of his face, runs the smooth cold blade across the surface of her skin.

NOTE: Does this simply mean she is thinking of the past? Jeffrey had a past.

- - - - -

Touching

He touches her. He touches the child. The child screams.

NOTE: The child and her seem identical here.

She touches the blade of the knife to him, cold, smooth. He does not speak.

He screams. The child does not speak. The child [She] picks up the knife. There is no blood.

NOTE: Is the knife the child? Does she pick up and carry the child?

There is no child. NOTE: Does she pick up the knife and leave?

There is only morning.

- - - - -

Things

He does not speak to her.
He touches.
She does not speak.
She only screams.

- - - - -

Penis Things

He undresses her.
She undresses.
He is undressed.

- - - - -

Morning

Their arms are entwined. They are undressed. They speak slowly, deliberately. They remember morning and the summer sun. They speak to the child.

They are sunwarmed and undressed. The child is nearly naked, sitting on the carpet.

They long for morning.

NOTE: They and she may be the same person.

- - - - -

She Expects

Morning and the summer sun. She has no need for blankets. Her flesh aches from the gravel.

NOTE: She has no need for memories/the past. Or she has no need for words. This makes more sense considering the following.

She remembers cold.

She remembers traces of sweat, salty, windy.

She expects him to come, nearly naked.

NOTE: Expecting is obviously important. It may the opposite of remembering. Expecting/remembering binary. Future/past. Maybe expecting has something to do with the cold blade?

- - - - -

She Aches

She aches. She longs to sit. She sits, thighs naked, tugging at her shirt.

She falls to her knees. She counts to ten, slowly, deliberately. He is heavy. He is cold.

His carpet is stained with blood. There are loose fibers. She tries to speak to him. She can only scream.

NOTE: OK, she appears to kill him here. But is this Jeffrey?

Before it says that the child aches.

- - - - -

Wishing

She wishes he had stayed with her. She wishes like a child that he had followed her and stayed that night.

The morning comes. Summer sun, heavy, falling across the carpet fibers. She is on her knees, facing the child.

The child aches. The child comes to her, nearly naked. She speaks slowly, deliberately.

NOTE: Who is the child? She wishes like a child.

- - - - -

Notes

- - - - -

Note

Touching, speaking, screaming, walking away, nearly naked, following, talking

- - - - -

Note
She has killed him.
- - - - -
Note
Nouns--knife, carpet fibers, gravel, flesh, feet, orange juice, sweat, blood, tears, screams, the baby, naked thighs, shirt
- - - - -

"I Have Said Nothing," by J. Yellowlees Douglas

- - - - -

We were weaned

Hell, we were weaned on the economics of death according to Hollywood. On the four o'clock movies wedged in between school and dinner, on the early evening and late Saturday films that kicked around on the UHF stations, you'd witnessed maybe eighteen thousand deaths. Shit, maybe thirty thousand: it depended on how many times you'd watched The Wild Bunch.

- - - - -

Do you remember Sherry?

Remember Sherry? My brother Luke's piece: the one who got into that godawful tangle with him at Paycheck's in Hamtramck. The one who threw that half-empty bottle of Beefeater Gin at his head when he told her to stop drinking. The one who folded up like an old coat and skidded flapping down the length of the basement wall when he elbowed her square in the solar plexus.

Hell, you remember Sherry, I'm sure.

The thing is, she's dead.

- - - - -

He took home artifacts

He took home artifacts: the soiled underpants ornamented with nylon lace, the pair of sparkly blue socks she was wearing, a barrette that had been knocked into the gutter—he wasn't even sure if it was hers or not.

He slept with this collection heaped under his pillow, along with one of the pair of spike heels she'd been wearing, a six inch number which may or may not have been responsible for the accident.

NOTE: Now we're talking about Sherry again. The reading path leads one to confuse Sherry and Jule.

- - - - -

Anatomy

Do you know what happens to you when a Chevy Nova with a 280 engine hits you going 75 miles an hour?

- - - - -

Run over

It runs over and over in your head, like the loop of film in the Volvo commercial, with the crash dummies bouncing forward in unison, choreographed in slomo like an overcranked version of Swan Lake or an Esther Williams number. You were both soused but, shit, when was the last time you played a gig without being fucked up? You wouldn't care to take odds on that one. Besides, Sherry had learned how to be quietly fucked up, which was the one thing that counted. There's nothing wrong with being out of your fucking head, just as long as you're not flamboyant about it.

You remember her coming up to you, dog-like, awaiting words of praise, a little compensatory pat on the head for not chucking bottles of Beefeater gin at Paycheck's bar, or lobbing the remains of gin and tonic at the pinball machine in the back. And what did you tell her?

- - - - -

Slipped

You step off the curb, but those shoes your mother always bitched about—the ones your boyfriend called your "come-fuck-me" spikes—they grate against the concrete and you stagger. Just a half step.

But more than enough.

- - - - -

But still you knew

But still, you knew, as every kid did, that there was a definite, comforting order at work somewhere behind the scenes. The people you knew well, the ones whose names headed the rolling credits, the ones who had weeks named in their honor on the late-night movie slot, the ones who were important, they stuck around for the action.

The ones you barely knew or the ones you disliked—the spurned suitors and jealous deputies and cattle thieves, the Elisha Cooks and the ones without names, with forgettable faces or lousy teeth—they were thrown to death as a sop, something to stop the hunger pangs until the main course rolled around.

There was a neatness to death there, an admirable economy to it. Principals lingered like the sun at a summer evening's end. Character and supporting actors fell like dusk around the winter solstice, their lives running out in a shot or two. Extras snuffed it, their goings as brief and unremarkable as fruit flies'. They dropped two or three to a frame, and we thought nothing of it. It was natural; it was expected; it came with the territory.

- - - - -

Bound to happen

Shit, it was bound to happen, I suppose. Too much gin, too many Vivarin—remember how we used to eat those getting ready for exams? And the belief that nothing can touch you: the cars will always scream toward you like something out of a Warner Brothers cartoon. But they'll stop just like that too: the cowcatcher of the locomotive quivering just inches away from Bugs Bunny and the whole nine yards.

I guess she thought Warner Brothers took their ideas from life.

Or life took its ideas from Warner's. C'est la même chose.

- - - - -

All it took

Actually, it took a hell of a lot, if you ask me. It took about four quarts of Beefeater gin as well as a handful of Black Beauties, not to mention incredibly bad timing. And six inch spike heels.

- - - - -

Can we accept one?

Death was life's silent partner, no more than that, and we took its presence for granted in everything we watched.

So why did it catch us so unawares? Unscheduled, unannounced, unframed, it arrived around the time of the late show one night and was gone in less than fifteen seconds, like a cheap public service announcement.

She was gone like one of those women in monster films, the ones who inevitably trip a half dozen times before the camera —twitching violently to simulate the ferocity of the oncoming beast—overruns them, and their lives, narratively speaking, are extinguished. How is it, we, who have witnessed eighteen thousand deaths, cannot accept one?

- - - - -

Preferential treatment

And my mother gave him preferential treatment: an endless supply of man-sized Kleenex, the thermostat cranked up to 85 degrees to keep him from shaking.

The Old Lady even used Janitor in a Drum on the bloodstains in his room, the ones he put there after he slashed himself and used his wrist to write the first three letters of her name across the wall in a looping, feathery script before the blood dried out, and my mother prevented him from using more.

The blood stayed surprisingly red on the wall for about a week before he'd let my mother go at it. And when she encountered one of his usual, sticky skin magazines secreted under the bathroom vanity, she just gave a shudder of disgust and slid it back under again.

- - - - -

It wasn't healthy

It wasn't healthy, she said—Sherry's mother—about the way my brother was carrying on. Sleeping with his head jacked up about three yards off the pillow above an assortment of sparkly socks from K-Mart, Sherry's spiky "come-fuck-me" shoe (they never did find the other one), plus the coat she was wearing spread out all over the end of the bed.

In the end, she came over one day and asked for it all back: you can't hang onto a load of cloth, any more than you can to flesh and blood. But I think she was concerned about his hanging onto a load of polyester fibers as if it were her flesh and blood.

- - - - -

Anatomized

— It fractures your collarbone; your scapula; your pelvis; your sacral, lumbar, thoracic, and cervical vertebrae.

— It splinters your ribcage, compressing your liver, kidneys, spleen, stomach, intestines, lungs, and heart.

— It fractures your skull and bruises your brain.

— It causes massive hemorrhaging, throws the heart into cardiac arrest and hurls your central nervous system into profound shock.

- - - - -

All that vicarious

All that vicarious experience, that immense education we receive in death from the headlines and the evening news, from the grainy photograph on the inside pages that transmits the unutterable grief of a bystander witnessing the spectacle of death. From snippets of history and comic books and feature films that have cinema audiences honking in unison into their Kleenex. And it all signifies nothing. You understand only absence.

Your brother, who has brushed up against it in a crowd, had it elbow him in the ribs, jostle him on a platform as it made its way to greet somebody else, how much does he understand?

- - - - -

Faint surprise

Hardcore drinking problem. Seriously insecure. Mondo bucks. That was Sherry all right. When I go, she used to say, I want it to be fast. It sure as fuck was, as far as we know. Luke said, when he saw her face, there was only a faint expression of surprise on it—she was a major baby about pain. I wasn't there, so it's hard for me to imagine what that must have looked like.

You could say that faint expressions of anything weren't an overly familiar component of her particular repertoire.

- - - - -

She hadn't

If he were an articulate kind of guy, he'd have said that it was ironic. What he said instead was that Sherry hadn't been drinking that night, that she'd behaved herself that night—by way of a change—that it was ridiculous that galumphy old Laura, who was such a notorious klutz, was the one who had made the opposite curb in one piece.

I guess maybe we should have read it differently, used what he said like an algebraic expression: for not drinking, we should attach a sort of unknown factor, like, "she never usually got fucked up after only two bottles of champagne and a few kamikaze," or something like that.

But we didn't.
I, for one, believed him.
It was easier that way.
- - - - -
Or oops!
Perhaps you have trouble judging just how fast the oncoming car is traveling.

The autopsy will indicate that your blood alcohol level was over four times the legal limit.

The driver who hits you, a twenty-four year-old by the name of Charon, is just over the legal limit.

That makes two drunks involved in a collision.

Only she walks afterwards.
- - - - -
He even
picked out her grave site. Later, he told me, as we drove down Grand River one night, her old man had wanted to stick her in the ground any old place: he'd pounced at the first slot they'd offered him. "Next to fucking Telegraph, man."

She'd been killed on Telegraph, just a little inside the official Detroit city limits. Her old man probably thought Telegraph was a whole different ballgame, once you got out to the real chi-chi suburbs, like Birmingham.

- - - - -
Every one

It breaks every bone in your body.

Including your head.
- - - - -
He was obsessive
about the funeral arrangements. He went to the funeral home to supervise her laying out, taking along with him her high school graduation photograph, to show them the way she'd worn her eyeliner and the rest. He'd chosen the last blouse and skirt she'd ever wear—nobody asked him why he'd selected that particular outfit—and he kept peering into the casket. He was screwing up his eyes—he'd already cried so much they looked as if they'd been leaking battery acid—and looking down at her chest.

"Look," he said to anyone who'd listen. "Those bastards who did her autopsy, they've fucking stitched her chest all crooked. Her sweet little chest."
- - - - -
And then . . .
And then . . .

Nothing.

- - - - -

But this isn't all

The guys with the EMS stand looking down at her. One of them nudges her with the tip of his hightops. Her right arm flaps slightly, the way a blow-up doll's might.

"Shit, she's daid," he says.

How do we define death?

- - - - -

You enter

When you go over to her house, you step into her bedroom. A pair of her shoes are facing the bed. She left a little hoop of her hair inside a rubber band, lying alongside the princess phone on her bedside table. The line of really pathetic-looking stuffed animals that always looked ready to erupt into clouds of weevils seems to be waiting for her. The closet door is ajar. A can of flat Diet Coke is perched next to the bed. The fluffy quilt has the imprint of her little keester still on it.

- - - - -

Give me five

You tell her to go outside, not to bug you until you finish coiling up the cable for the junction boxes: the fucking roadies never get this right; they're always leaving one or two behind. She goes outside on auto-pilot, but, hell, she's been driving practically on fucking auto-pilot since she was sixteen.

If they ever breathalyzed her, they'd probably end up inscribing her level on the side, putting it in a showcase downtown, or something: Highest Blood-Alcohol Reading Ever Registered by A Still-Living Subject.

That was the last time you saw her, really. The rest was all just blood and skin.

- - - - -

Give me fie

You tell her to go outside, not to bug you until you both cool off a little bit. You suggest that maybe the beach was the right kind of place for that.

As for you, you'd do something worthwhile, like take care of all that Christmas bullshit. Why you said this, Christ only knows. You fucking hate Christmas, bullshit and all.

That was the last time you saw her, really. The rest was all just blood and skin.

- - - - -

Did she think

Did she think: I am the story, its pivot, its source. It can't go on without me . . . ?

- - - - -

In Psycho

Yeah, Marion Crane thought that: the story was all about her, her guilt, her greed, her adultery. And just look what happened. She stumbled into the minefield of someone else's story—one that just happened to involve a schizo named Norman Bates.

The rest, as they say, is history.

- - - - -

He was holding her feet
Because the December night outside was freezing, literally—that was what had made her scamper across Telegraph Road's lethal arteries, after all—Luke knelt down at the curb and collected her into his lap. When the Detroit police found him, he was cradling her bare feet between his palms.

The shoes had been knocked from her feet, he explained in quite a level voice, and he couldn't find them anymore. But she'd always hated the cold—she was quite a baby about it, in fact.

- - - - -

Later
Later he would come back looking for some things: the diamond earrings she'd been wearing when they set out that night but which never quite made it to the morgue.

The octagon of skin she'd left against one curb, as opaque and delicate as a fragment of ice skimmed from the surface of a pond not yet frozen over.

- - - - -

He had forgotten
a conversation he'd had with Sherry, one he'd repeated to you six months before. Now you remind him of it.

After he'd argued violently with her—and your brother could be a real bastard at the best of times—she'd hugged him, impulsively.

"What'd you do that for?" he asked her. "I'm not about to hug you back right now, am I?"

"No," she'd replied. "But that's okay: I hug my Daddy loads of times, and he never hugs me back."

- - - - -

Jesus Christ
he said, taking his foot off the accelerator, so that we were gliding gently to a halt, driving down the middle of Grand River in traffic, cars on all sides of us.

"Jesus Christ," he repeated. You tried looking furtively into his side-view mirror to see if you're both about to get rear-ended by an irate driver.

That's when he turned to look at you, full face. "I'd forgotten all about that." He started to cry again.

Sometimes you forgot she was eighteen.

- - - - -

Blam!
You think it's a lark: you're bored, you toss a couple of airplanes made out of The Detroit Free Press into the air and watch the slipstream from the traffic speeding by whisk them along on miniature whirlwinds. You run into the median strip to retrieve one of them and toss it back the other way.

But something happens on the way back across. You misjudge the distance, maybe, between you and the oncoming car.

- - - - -

We could also say
but that's not really the cause of her death.

We could be clinical and insist that it's hypoxia. Her cells get starved of oxygen, and they die, in shoals, granted.

But that means she dies piecemeal, perception gradually getting snuffed out, sense by sense. Or it gets distorted—so she thinks she's flying toward a bright light and all those other things doctors tell you are simply the reactions of a brain starved of oxygen. And not someone experiencing death and the liberation of her soul.

- - - - -

We could say
all cessation of cardiac activity.

No evidence of any brain activity.

- - - - -

Who thinks?

Who thinks about Marion Crane and the money? Who's still thinking of her by the time the credits roll, and Norman in his strait jacket and the Bates Motel have just flickered their way into the collective consciousness of almost half the twentieth century?

- - - - -

Drew
"Do you remember old Drew in Deliverance?" he says to you.
"Sherry and I used to think it was real gross, the way that Jon Voigt kissed Drew before he pushed the body under. Kissing a dead guy like that."

You don't need to answer him, just let him keep going.

"Man, that's what I did. In the morgue. I kissed her everywhere. Everything. I even kissed her little box. There was a social worker in the room and all and I just didn't care. She wasn't a dead body—" He starts to cry once again. Anything else he had to convey to you is lost.

- - - - -

But does it stop?
But suppose the brain goes on for a while, its cells receiving all the million minute impressions that fuel its functions—it just doesn't do anything with them. Maybe it goes on working for a bit, like the moment in a documentary you saw once about the Riga riots, where the cameraman gets nailed but his camera goes on recording its impressions, the lens lying on the cobbles, filming fleeing ankles and flares in the distance. Until the film runs out somewhat after his life does.

- - - - -

No body

Nobody.

- - - - -

Later still,
Later still, he'd come back looking for something else. When the moment was right, he stepped off the curb where he'd sat holding her feet the Saturday before.

- - - - -

If that's so

If that's so, then I hope she didn't hear them.

- - - - -

In the ambulance

They're in the ambulance heading toward the hospital. Its siren and lights are on, and it's pushing the speed limit, full whack. The EMS guys know she's dead, but they're in a rush to get off their shift and back to the hospital, so they put them on. Technically, since she's a DOA, this thing should be going like a hearse through streets still dark with sleep.

Inside, the sound of everything—the sirens, the medics, the steady hiss of the snow tires against the wet tarmac, everything—is drowned out by the sound of blood running from her ears, just like water running under a sluice.

- - - - -

Tom Buchanan

Somewhere, somebody else is going through this, the Tom Buchanan moment when he goes back to his covert little Harlem love nest and sobs over the half-filled box of dog biscuits left on the sideboard, after he watched Myrtle buy the farm under the wheels of his wife's car.

All the unfinished business, the pure messiness of life, always sticks around to haunt us.

- - - - -

She walks

And, anyway, when Marion Crane is quite dead and the crew wipes the Hershey's chocolate syrup off her, Janet Leigh gets up and walks.

And collects a fat check afterwards. All Sherry will collect are mites—and whatever insects and bacteria can survive in a steel vault lined with concrete, set into Michigan clay.

- - - - -

The Old Lady

My mother is there with him—she was pretty good about this kind of thing back then—and she grabs him by the belt loops of his 501's and yanks him toward her.

"Just remember one thing," she says to him. "If you go over this time, you're taking me with you."

- - - - -

I

All I collect are fictions.

- - - - -

A story

It's all just a story, something you can spin into a plot with memorable characters and a few good lines that'll stick in the craw and maybe even something approximating real closure, if you play your cards right.

Then it'll be something tangible, something solid that exists Out There and maybe even gives somebody a few minutes' distraction from, say, riding the Lexington Avenue local at rush hour zippered into the cars like sardines in a can, or the pitch of the high-powered whine of the dentist's drill—heard piercing the dreadful quiet of the waiting room just before your name is called.

In short, something that has fucking nothing whatever to do with you. It's all just fiction.

Tell me a goddamned story.

- - - - -

- - - - -
Why?
When I call him after the accident (we're talking about the second accident now), neither of us has any words to pass back and forth over the phone.

Finally, he just says, "Why."

It's not even a question. Which is good, because I don't have any answers for him. I could say something lame about people wasting their lives trying to make things matter. Or how we spend our days mistaking patterns for Order.

But I say nothing.

NOTE: Do we mistake patterns for order in hypertext? We crave order. Saying nothing leaves a gap--a gap between order and chaos? Order would be stillness behind the motion picture of life.
- - - - -
The End

That's all she wrote.
- - - - -
Fucked up
It's like waking up from a blackout, after the shock. You can't quite get a grip on what the hell's just happened, where all those lost moments and hours got to. You realize you're staring up at the night sky.

And you hear his voice, over the screams:

"Man, Sherry—this time you've really fucked up."
- - - - -
What?
For a long time afterwards, whenever you two don't quite meet up on the phone, he can't seem to get the narrative order of events quite right. He keeps shuffling it around, until you realize neither of you know what it was anymore.

One day he tells you that Jule berated the EMS guys all the way to the UCLA medical center. There doesn't seem to be any point in reminding him that yesterday he told you the police broke all the gory details to him about seven or eight hours after the accident, or that the day before he said they'd both been drinking.

What he says is this:
- - - - -
Deja vu
That's his last memory of Jule, before they take her away, arguing weakly while the EMS guys rip open her shirt and cut through her bathing suit.

The sound of her voice is reassuring. Death is for other people. It has nothing to do with us.

- - - - -
You wonder
Did she know? Did she have some faint nudge between the ribs, some vague tickle that life's silent partner was going to call in his debts that afternoon?

Or was it just a coincidence? Like Sherry saying to the Old Lady, a few weeks before the accident: "When I die, it's gonna be fast. Like I didn't know what hit me."

- - - - -

When he looks at Jake
he realizes the utter impossibility of his ever having the words to tell him this.

He has no inkling of what they would even sound like.

- - - - -

You sit, you think
You sit and think for a while, maybe forty-five minutes solid, about the ugliness of your primary urge—which is to write all of this down. Somewhere inside you, through all the tears and the gastric juices churning away in your stomach, and the faint, sour taste of vomit you can't seem to rinse completely out of your mouth, somewhere, through all of this, your brain is ticking away like a metronome.

This goes just before the climax, you're thinking. And, when your brother breathes audibly down the line for a moment or two, then says clearly:

"I wish to Christ it'd been you. Why the fuck wasn't it you instead?"

You know you've really got a story. This is simply the grain that irritates. You hear it. And then again you don't.

- - - - -

Yet he knows
that the only person in the world who is going to break the news to Jake is sitting in his chair.

Last night, in the parking lot, a guy with a shitty Saturday Night Special had jumped him. When he found Luke didn't have a shred of fucking paper on him—nothing, nada—he was so disgusted he didn't even try to pistol-whip him. Now, looking at Jake's lips curling up around the tube in an attempt at a smile, he wishes the guy had fucking bashed his skull to kingdom come. Given him retrograde amnesia. Tossed the coroner another stiff for the fridge. Three foil boxes back at the goddamned house.

Through the jungle of IV's and feeding tubes and snarl of catheter and ventilator, Jake's fingers are scrabbling at the slate.

They give you far too much to eat in here, he writes.

- - - - -

Random sweepings

The fairest order in the world is a heap of random sweepings.

— Heraclitus.

- - - - -

This time,
This time he calls Sherry's mother.
He wakes her up at three am and she answers the phone with a voice all rusty from sleep. And he tells her, he tells her how he was responsible for Sherry's dying.

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ø

And, in the end, you say nothing.

- - - - -

But I've said nothing

I have done nothing but wish to speak:
if I have spoken, I have not said what I wished to say.

— St. Augustine

NOTE: Is this a problem with signifiers and signified, the fact that signifiers always miss the mark?

- - - - -

Squealing
You're listening to her ranting about the jaws of life and how she's going to come back with a gun and kill all the gawkers who stood around waiting to watch her die.

From the sound of it, most of them would be ready to join the AARP by then.

But if you stop listening to her voice, then you tune into the exchange between the EMS guys, looking at each other. "Man, baby, we give you something for the pain, we gonna lose you." One of them gives her a local, and there's a little pause, like being put on hold. Then they start cutting: they bisect her right up under the ribcage and start cauterizing the bleeders.

Then it hits you, what they're preparing for is another DOA.

- - - - -

She always
had a distinctive voice—Jule did: dry, sarcastic, with a little stylized drawl drawing out the phrases, a way of speaking that you always figured she'd invented to make her stand out from everybody else in Detroit.

There's no reason for you to believe this particular version more than any other. Nobody was able to tell you which EMS crew hovered over her in her last quarter hour, and no one is exactly stepping forward and volunteering. Maybe even her last words hadn't sounded that different from what came out of any other accident victim's mouth. In the end, these last words probably all sound the same—after you've heard your first fifteen or twenty versions of them.

Pain.
Delusions.
Regrets.
Longing.
Disbelief.
Terror.

You envision the crew that heard them already enjoying collective amnesia by the time they'd finished signing the papers and sat down with some hot coffee in the ER.

- - - - -

Squeaking
Beyond a certain level, we're all infinitely interchangeable. In the room next to your's, the mattress squeaks like the leafsprings of your old man's Mustang, when it ratchets over potholes.

- - - - -
He calls you
on New Year's Eve. There's such a long silence on the phone after you pick it up that you assume automatically it's an obscene call and you get ready to slam the phone down at the first hint of audible breathing. It's an unusually silent pause, though, with just a hint of rushing white noise at the back of it that suggests, maybe, a trans-continental phone call, so you hang on.

"I think Jake's flipped," he says, finally.

Jule's father can't speak—he's hooked up to a respirator and he's in traction—but he can scratch out messages on a little slate strapped to the side of the bed. When Luke went to see him, he'd struggled to chalk out a message.

I think I'll go take a walk and get my paper, he'd written.

"He's cracking up," Luke says.
- - - - -
Then it hits you
—he's not going to pieces: he's trying to make a joke. But Luke can't see it.

That's because when Jake looks at Luke, he sees his daughter's boyfriend looking hollow-eyed, slumped over in the visitor's chair, the kind of morose, hang-dog type nearly always in need of a bit of cheering up.

He can't even begin to imagine what Luke sees when he looks across at him. When Luke looks at Jake, he doesn't see someone who will never walk again. What he sees is a man who hasn't yet realized that the two daughters he saw on Christmas day are now two tidy piles of ashes lying in two gold foil boxes, stowed in a rented house somewhere in North Hollywood.

NOTE: Did Jule and her little sister die?
- - - - -
Save him
Save him from what? he wonders.

But you know what she meant.

Save him from himself.
- - - - -
Two more drunks
This time, there are two more drunks.
Only they're driving sports cars and heading down Sunset in the opposite direction. Going about 60 miles too fast.

This time, there's another DOA.
This time, there's another trip to the morgue.
Only there's no one to hold his hand.
No one to wipe the bloodstains off the walls when he tries to squeeze rusty graffiti onto them.
No one to kick up the thermostat. Or to stop him from shaking.
This time there aren't even any skin magazines for comfort.
Or someone to prise the mementos mori from his grasp.
- - - - -
Nada

In the end, none of it works. I can't get into his head and even when I try to project his thoughts, the voice remains indelibly mine: there's no escaping it. I can only guess about her, about either of them.

Their deaths touch me like a stroll through the Holocaust Museum, where your consciousness seems to stutter in the face of the enormity of it all, all those private histories snuffed out, death dropped on residents like a mailshot. You blink, try to refocus your eyes, but human sight just wasn't made for that kind of acuity.

So you move on. And think of the enormity that divides you from all those others.

NOTE: Is it that death cannot be narrated? It is beyond our powers of narration, which is how we make sense of things. To say nothing is to refuse to narrate what can't be narrated.

- - - - -
One phrase
He hears it over and over in his head. It's the squeal of the monitor. It's the white noise over the radio in the EMS cab. It's the noise the axles make, the whine of the jumbos passing overhead on their way to LAX. Later it will be the sound of the steam thumping in the radiators. The phrase barked by the neighborhood dogs.

I'm dying, she says. Save him instead.
- - - - -
Get it down

By now, you've got this down. You've got it down, big time.
- - - - -
You realize
there are loads of things you never knew you never knew.

It just happens that you can't communicate any of them.

- - - - -
This is it
So this is it, this is what it all amounts to, I'm going to kiss the fucking world goodbye with these assholes in the back of an ambulance screaming its way through the bowels of LA. I don't even know where we're going, and I'm going to go out feeling someone dragging a scalpel across my stomach, paring me like an apple. I can feel everything, every little pop and rip and, as it goes on, all I hear is the squeal of my monitor cutting across all sound like a blanket of noise. Like a pig being butchered.

And you think, if I'd known all this—known I was guying to buy the farm before I hit thirty, surrounded by a bunch of guys who only give a flying fuck about me because they're being paid a lousy hourly wage—I'd have snatched at life with twenty hands. Or ten. Or even two.

Instead of just one.
- - - - -
You start not making
it. You haven't the faintest idea of what dying feels like, so you don't think to yourself, you know: This is it, I'm starting to die.

The first thing that clues me in is the way the EMS guys are screaming at each other. For a few seconds, I try to tell myself that maybe these guys are pissed off, what with handling bodies and shit all the time and probably not making too much money to boot. Then the guy monitoring my breathing and heartbeat says, right out loud, that they're losing me.

They wire me up, get an IV into me and I'm screaming the whole time, I think, I'm begging these guys to shoot me up, put me under, do something for the pain. It's fucking killing me.

There's a woman there and she seems to be the only one who remembers that there's a head attached to this body in pain—maybe nobody else gives a fuck, I don't know. She says, "That's right, honey, we put you under now, we gonna lose you," and she gives me a local. She might as well have jabbed me with a hypodermic full of water or something. I'm losing too much blood and they're going in before they get to the trauma unit, to prep me for the operating room.

That's when I realize I'm bleeding to death.

- - - - -

Get over

You never quite get over it: the way people replace living things with other living things. A year after the accident, your brother's back in his bedroom tussling with somebody else on the mattress that probably still has the come stains he used to brag about inscribed on it. They used to be Sherry's. Now (if the Old Lady could ever talk him into stripping the bed and washing the sheets) he'd probably attribute them to Jule.

- - - - -

Mate

You think maybe this is why people go through wedding rites, muster their friends and relatives and acquaintances up as witnesses: to make sure they'll feel squeamish about prematurely reneging on all the promises they've just made.

It's because humans know they're fundamentally incapable of mating for life.

- - - - -

Later that afternoon

he goes down to the morgue and finds them waiting for him in two little gold foil boxes, like bath salts from Bonwit's.

Then he has a fight with Aleis' boyfriend—who wants to take what's left of her back with him to Santa Fe—over the ashes.

- - - - -

I could die

Later on—he can't get the chronology straight, but you understand by this he probably means weeks rather than days—Clare will tell him what Aleis had said on the way out to the beach by way of mending a few fences. Aleis was, after all, the one who'd got pissy about the situation with the sleeping bag. It was to have been her first Christmas away from Uganda; she'd been working in hospitals there as a volunteer for five years.

"I loved my job, I love my family, I love my life," she said. "I've had a really good life, you know? If I died today—hell, I wouldn't be sorry."

- - - - -

In court

they will later establish that the kid had been swigging from a mostly empty bottle of champagne and that he'd been racing the Probe his daddy'd given him four days earlier with another sixteen year-old down Sunset. You know, whoever reaches the beach first wins.

Problem was, there were about six lights in the way and about a hundred and forty cars.

One of them happened to be hers.

- - - - -

The police arrive

This is no neurotic mother's nightmare imaginings in the seconds before the wayward son or daughter shows up on the stoop, made a few minutes late by an unduly long midnight clinch or something of that ilk.

You see, he's been there before.

- - - - -

Nope

It all depends, I guess, on whether you'd choose to spend your last second as a conscious being mulling over something completely banal. Or to spend it with your eyes trained on the Death Express, as it hurtles toward you at half the speed of light.

Personally, I'd opt for the banal approach.

- - - - -

Neither

Neither of them ever saw what hit them. You think. There was just that faint surprise on Sherry's face, as if the perception hadn't quite had the time to register before her brain basically got blasted inside her skull. The impact of the accident knocked Jule unconscious—nobody in the car had the few seconds necessary to register the presence of a new Ford Probe hurtling toward them across the yellow line.

Would you choose the same?

NOTE: These are two separate accidents.

- - - - -

In the ambulance

They split us up, I guess they decided that we had enough trauma to keep three units busy. You don't think about these things.

On TV, it's always so easy, the EMS guys run in with somebody strapped to a gurney and they whip you straight into the ER and that's it. Someone opens you up and, in the next scene, you're smiling vaguely from between the bedsheets, you know, in some fucking private room with, like, banks of flowers all over the place, practically hanging off the goddamned ceiling.

Nobody tells you they're going to treat you like a sorry sad sack of shit, that they've got to stick needles and pipes and every other fucking thing in you to prep you for the trauma unit.

Nobody lets on that you might not make it.

- - - - -

No, they won't

Her last words will be—they didn't make sense at the time, she seemed to be in the best shape of all of us, moving around and talking and all—

I'm dying, save my sister, save my sister.

I'd rather not remember this part.

- - - - -

There it is

Your brother replaces one body with another. Once in a while, he talks about the state of her body in its cement-lined vault, but mostly, he resumes living with Juliet exactly as he did with Sherry.

He buys an alligator—a caiman, actually—and smuggles it out to California in a styrofoam cooler.

They collect stray cats that play hockey with the occasional eggs the iguanas leave around.

The caiman plays in a kiddie pool in their backyard in North Hollywood.

Time passes.

- - - - -

Less

Maybe less than even you do.

You would revere absence. He buries it.

In somebody else.

NOTE: Who is speaking here? Whoever it is is speaking to the sister (or brother) of Luke. She is a musician.

- - - - -

Get a knife

They collect in little puddles, standing about five feet away from the rental car and they look at the four of us like we're something in the fucking zoo, or an exhibit of the car Jayne Mansfield got beheaded in. You can take your pick. I start screaming at them to get me out of the car, because I can't move anything and the thing wrapped around my chest is killing me. And I ain't talking figuratively.

But they've all watched too many sixty second spots, where the questions are always easy and the answers come thick and fast. Release the safety catch at the front, they keep saying. It should be under the dash. Either the car never fucking had one to begin with, or it's now part of what probably looks like a Giacometti from the outside, so this is a big help. This starts some major fucking head scratching. They all stand around some more, and I keep screaming: I'm calling them all cocksuckers and motherfuckers, I'm threatening to come back with a 9mm later on and blow their brains out, but it doesn't do any good.

Finally some old lady comes out with a great whacking kitchen knife, and some guy with a tattooed tear leaking out the corner of his eye takes it from her and starts sawing away at the strap through the broken window. He stops and clears the glass with the toe of his Pumas and carries on with the sawing. It seems to take about a half a century and, while I'm waiting, I stare at the tear on his face.

- - - - -

It falls

This time around—everything falls to Luke. The first time, Sherry's mother and brother and sister had converged to form a protective ring around him. Because he had loved her probably more than anybody—or needed her more desperately in his own way than anybody else could imagine needing her, at any rate—they'd pitied him and commiserated with him and suffered alongside him.

This time, though, he was alone. The girls, sitting up in front, had suffered hardcore internal damage; in the back, her parents' skeletons had snapped like cocktail pretzels—they were left with fewer bones unbroken than broken. Keeping watch over their bedsides, he doesn't know what to do, he can't decide.

NOTE: There has been a second accident. This time Luke is at home and Juliet was with her sister Aleis and their parents, who were in the backseat. In the first accident Sherry got hit while trying to cross a road.

- - - - -

When the moment
of truth arrives, however, he responds without hesitation. He spent the morning over at the morgue, trying to persuade somebody, any white coat that looked as if it possessed a shred of authority, not to cremate the girls before their parents regained consciousness. Then he headed over to UCLA in time to catch Clare just coming out of surgery.

When he sees her on the gurney he feels something like reverse suction working on his viscera. Everything seems to be bucking upwards—and he's still willing it back down when Clare opens her eyes. He tries to focus on a bit of skin that isn't puffed black with trauma, then settles on her hair. Her eyelids flutter, she focuses miraculously—Clare always was fucking tough as an old nail—and asks how her girls are. He doesn't miss a beat: his voice is as steady and dry as always.

"They're hanging in there," he says.

- - - - -

Cooked goose
My brother's viscera, to put it delicately, have been bugging him. So he consigns himself to the john for the afternoon while Jule takes Aleis, and her two parents—physically fragile but feisty as hell—along with her through the LA traffic. He watches the car snake off down Sunset through the bathroom screen, and it seems to him later that the car spent an incredibly long time receding. A little like that steady zoom that closes on William Holden in The Wild Bunch, so that he appears to be growing closer even as he's riding away, his silhouette fading into the distance.

He guts the goose for Christmas dinner. Then he cooks it.
He cooks the stuffing and doles out the cranberries.
And rakes every last leaf from the lawn.
And feeds the cats.
And the iguanas and the caiman.
He even checks the oil in his dilapidated Nova.

And then he waits for the police to arrive.

- - - - -

Eight years later
while the wheel's still spinning, the little ball drops into Luke's particular slot again—only, in this particular game of chance, he doesn't rake the chips in; they get swept out from under his nose.

After a botched appendectomy (which included a nightmare scene in the recovery room that involved waking to the Four O'Clock Movie right at the moment when Tony Curtis as Houdini gasps out the promise, "I'll come back . . . I'll . . . come . . . back . . ." as he dies from peritonitis—just down the street, it turns out, from Luke's old house back in Detroit,) he declines to accompany his girlfriend of seven years to Zuma Beach.

There had been another argument, the night before. Something—a cat or an iguana or maybe even the caiman—had dropped a little calling card in the bottom of her sister, Aleis', sleeping bag and, apparently, lots of shouting and yelling had ensued. He didn't say whether any lobbed bottles of Beefeater gin had figured in it.

- - - - -

You never saw
Remember how they say that? "He never knew what hit him." The Old Lady always said it almost triumphantly, as if she were somehow one up on the unfortunate parties under discussion by knowing what had hit them in the end. Maybe she was right.

The way you figured it, not knowing what hit you put you in a position of not only utter helplessness but of absolute ignorance. An acquaintance of mine once told me about a friend of his who'd died in that incident involving an inbound L-1011 and windshear at Dallas-Fort Worth. "I imagine her talking about her grandchildren to her seat-mate, looking out the window, getting all excited about seeing Dallas," he said.

"She was like an insect before it gets swatted."

- - - - -

At Christmas
Over Christmas, while you're staying in New York at a hotel on the Upper West Side, you drop by to change your clothes late one afternoon and happen to notice that the message light next to the phone is blinking. You go into the voice mail system and play back the message recorded in your sister-in-law's scratchy voice.

It tells you another one of your brother's girlfriends has been killed.

- - - - -

It happens
I think of it happening in slow motion, like something out of a bad imitation of Sam Peckinpah—or a Volvo commercial, take your pick. But it must have happened real fast, because, when all of us came to after what was maybe, I don't know, five, ten seconds, Aleis is the first one to speak.

"Jules, what happened?"

These will be her last words.

- - - - -

Move
You can't. There's some bullshit about the passive restraint giving way if you get pitched forward, so you don't, you know, get your shoulders both dislocated or anything like that. It happens in accidents where you get hit head-on.

But the restraint thing locks up—or maybe the whole car got so fucking pretzeled up that it did go slack and then seized up. All I know is it locked around me, like some kind of goddamned giant boa constrictor, stretched right across my ribcage. It's like it gave a gentle little squeeze to my heart and lungs, you know, then wrapped its tail around my spleen and guts.

Now the neighborhood comes out to play. There's nothing like a wreck to bring 'em all outdoors—better than a sideshow. Or watching your next door neighbor beat his wife's face into hamburger while you stand back behind your kitchen or living room screens and suck your teeth in disapproval, but never call 911—why bother, what's the use?

The wreck—us—it's a real spectacle without the guilt. It has nothing to do with you, it's like it just happened to wash up in your neighborhood.

Kinda like teevee.

- - - - -

COMMENTARY
This is my commentary.

- - - - -
film
Film and late night movies are important.
- - - - -
Silent Partner
"Death is life's silent partner." Beautiful line.
- - - - -
Facts

- - - - -
stats
There are about 99 lexias in the original hypertext.

The default path always leads to "That's all she wrote."
- - - - -
Cast
Cast of characters:

Narrator--may be female, musician
Luke--brother of narrator
Sherry--Luke's first girlfriend; she is killed crossing a road
Laura--friend of Sherry
Juliet/Jules--Luke's second girlfriend; dies in auto accident along with Aleis.
Aleis--Jule's sister, who is killed in the auto accident
Jake--Jule's father; he and his wife are injured in the same accident
Clare--Jule's mother, Jake's wife
- - - - -

Notes

- - - - -
behind scenes
There is no stillness behind the motion of the scene. Space doesn't stand still for us to draw on it, to map it.

A reader would not know that I have added this lexia unless s/he looked at the map view.
- - - - -
space moves
Space moves. Hypertext space moves, too. One way this movement is expressed is by using the guard fields. For example, the default link from lexia 1 may go to lexia 2, but after the reader has gone from lexia 1 to 2 once the default link can change to lexia 3. Thus the reading path or text moves, somewhat like the ground shifting under one's feet.
- - - - -
late show
The late show is a prominent motif.
- - - - -
nothing
Death has nothing to do with us; it is a fiction. This is a central leitmotif. Are we dissociated from death because of the movies? Or is everything a narrative? Douglas is interested in narratology. Death cannot be narrated. But fictions are narrated.
- - - - -
second accident

It's the second accident even though this is a multilinear text--the accident that kills Jules and Aleis and badly injures their parent.

- - - - -

simulacrum

The movies may be a simulacrum, a simulation more real than the real. (Baudrillard). The characters in this hypertext are living in hyperreality.

- - - - -

Cyborg: Engineering The Body Electric, by Diane Greco

The complete text of *Cyborg: Engineering the Body Electric* prints outs to sixty-one pages at 10 point font. Because of this length, aside from the title page, I have only copied the lexias in which I have written notes or commentary.

- - - - -
start here

- - - - -
table of contents

— Introduction
— Your Body is Meat
— Machine Dreams
— Mind, Body, Anti-Body
— Cyborg Visions
— Communication & Control
— Writing the Cyborg
— What Do Cyborgs Know?
- - - - -

- - - - -
COMMENTARY
- - - - -
The edge is metonymic. See Irigaray.
- - - - -
Tactics are timely, opportune actions taken in foreign territory. Strategy involves long-term planning from a stable base of power. Tactics are about resistance to power.
- - - - -
Shelley Jackson wrote, in an e-mail to me, that she is concerned about internalized control.

4. Do you think that the Patchwork Girl's fragmented, multiple nature
>allows her to slip out of the masculine, controlling grasp, or perhaps to
>evade the voyeuristic male gaze? In other words, is there a freedom in
>fragmentation or multiplicity?

I think there is a potential freedom in fragmentation and multiplicity, though I'm not sure it has to do with evading other people's control; I'm more concerned about the control exerted from within that shuts off options and makes us one-dimensional and boring in our attempt to lay our hands on a unified, secure self. I was trying to propose a cheerfully decentered way of composing a self.
- - - - -
Being-with, power-with . . . This is the key to cybernetics and the cyborg.
- - - - -
"Technology is visceral." This means there is no separation, no distance, between the human and the machine.
- - - - -

Forgetting is an integral part of reading. We read with short-term memory, forgetting one string of text as we proceed to the next. Only rereading shifts text to long-term memory.

- - - - -

Power is an important theme in the text, with 35 lexias containing this word. Power is about establishing a place, a stable base of of operations. From such a place, strategy, rather than mere tactics, are possible.

- - - - -

Cyborgs to not reproduce; they are not copies of an orginal or prototype. There is no ideal or perfection or the fall.

In the digital world, reproduction is supplanted by replication. Reproduction belong to the old analog world.

- - - - -

The cyborg, with its extended mind, may be rhizomatic; it can mend itself with new parts, just like ants will always come back together if separated. The cyborg really has no center, because its parts may be scattered all over the world. The Patchwork Girl is also a kind of rhizome; she is called a "swarm."

- - - - -

- - - - -

student

Shelley Jackson also studied with Landow at Brown.

- - - - -

potent

Of course, science fiction has always traded in possible worlds. But the difference, with cyberpunk, is that the world envisioned is often very difficult to distinguish from the familar concrete-and-speed landscape of late-twentieth century urban industrialized nations. And the technology is always just another breakthrough away. In cyberpunk, the world is not only possible, but just visible on the techno-horizon.

This potent combination of science fiction and technological fact in cyberpunk sf offers an escape from the physical body. It also comments on the boundaries of that body, as well as on the social reality that defines it. The body is, among other things, a social question. Cyberpunk answers to that question are characteristic of both the technology itself and the socio-cultural milieu of late twentieth century post-industrial landscape in which the narratives are embedded.

NOTE: Shelley Jackson is also very concerned with the body.

- - - - -

symbolism

"Through cybernetics, the symbol is embodied in an apparatus — with which it is not to be confused, the apparatus being just its support."

NOTE: The apparatus is an interface, for example, the pages of a book.

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desire

We desire.

We wish to possess what we desire.

Getting what you want involves strategy; the harder question, which I will leave aside for the moment, is which strategy to choose. Strategy is the manipulation of reality to achieve a pre-specified end; this manipulation reconfigures the world, makes it different from what it was before.

Strategy also involves tactics, which are the concrete local processes involved in getting what you want. Both strategy and tactics intervene upon the world; but this intervention is only purely functional unless you start thinking about what you want and why you want it in the first place.

And that's when you might begin thinking in terms of representation. If you want a trip around the world, an atlas will not do — but if you took that trip, what good would it do you unless you could point to an atlas later and say "I was there"? Making your experiences comprehensible to others means making those experiences expressible. And if reality is fundamentally social, then all reality is representation in one way or another. The phenomenal world exists, but in such an underdetermined way that we take our minds to it in order to figure it out for ourselves.

NOTE: Greco's definitions of strategy and tactics are different than those of Michel de Certeau.

I disagree with Greco's claim that reality is fundamentally social. Much of our reality is social, but not all of it. A toothe ache is not social; proprioception is not social. These kinds of experiences do not need to be represented to others through language in order to me realized.

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cyborg 3

Because virtual worlds create discursive spaces in which the boundaries of the self are fluid — intermingling with the consciousness of others, often machines — this project uses cyberpunk science fiction to explore the image of the cyborg as a confluence of information technology and social interaction that promises to make and remake us into what we perhaps already are.

NOTE: Is she claiming that machines have consciousness, or is this a premise of cyberpunk fiction?

- - - - -

- - - - -

closure

In its inevitability (and perhaps even necessity) the technological disaster bears down on us like one of those steam-powered locomotives that used to horrify us in Bugs Bunny cartoons on Saturday mornings.

But what exactly was the disaster in the cartoon? Just the waiting, since we all knew Bugs would pop right back up again, re-inflated, immune.

NOTE: Douglas' "I Have Said Nothing" contains a similar reference to Bugs Bunny.

- - - - -

writing the cyborg

Constituting the cyborg body means writing it. But the cyborg body has already been written or inscribed in a very special way; not only do technological devices mark the cyborg, but they constitute her identity as the interpenetration of organism and machine, fantasy-creator and the created fantasy, inscribed writer and

her own text. If technology is our fantasy cathexis of the body, the cyborg, as the product of both bodily reality, techno-fact and science fiction, is a rootless child sprung from a tradition that cannot claim her as its own. She represents the other — fantastic, monstrous, frightening — that has always already been denied.

NOTE: The cyborg is rootless because it is a rhizome rather than a tree.

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bio as destiny

But unlike the essentialist critics of the past who implied that one's biology must restrict one's destiny, no one forces or delimits the intimate relationship between her body and her self; "cyborg" is an identity she chooses on her own, with an eye toward its limits as well as it possibilities.

NOTE: We don't necessarily choose to be cyborgs. Amputees don't choose to have a prosthesis instead of a leg.

---

perpetuum

The perpetually self-undermining nature of the cyborg perspective attests not to its uselessness but to the challenging nature of all claims to knowledge and the need to evaluate those claims regardless of the limited nature of the evaluation.

NOTE: Deleuze and Guattari argue that nomads, bands, and gangs undermine institutional power; they do not have an office of leader that is filled by a line of people, like our presidency. Leaders, or chiefs, are more like stars, who reign for a while but eventually fall out of favor and are replaced by someone with more charisma. So there is no state separate from the people, no office that outlasts the leader; leadership is unstable. So the self-undermining of the cyborg is akin to the nomadic social organization. The cyborg is rhizomatic, then.

There is no center of power in nomadic society---no Washington, London, or Rome. Authority is dispersed. A hypertext also has no center.

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passing

When it comes to self-representation, the cyborg recognizes that what holds true in one perspective may not count as truth in another. Self construction, who or what one is, largely depends on where one situates oneself—in a particular society, as a particular self, with particular means of justification for that self—at the time. From the perspective of the cyborg, all representation is in one important sense mis-representation, or passing; because the cyborg so radically alters the integrity of some original, all self-representation is construction of a fictional persona, and there is no reliable physical instantiation on which to rely for proof of identity.

NOTE: There is no original; the cyborg is not a copy of a prototype; it is not a representation. The cyborg follows the logic of association rather than representation or mimesis.

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appended

In cyberpunk, sex takes on an entirely new meaning: it is a meat-function, the inevitable result of living with the demands of physical body. If technological-biological upgrades and replication replace reproduction, sexual desire and even genitals are useless as an appendix, a residue from an earlier time when the body needed to be sexual in order to reproduce itself. "All the meat," thinks Case in Neuromancer, "and all it wants."

hey, send me back...

NOTE: Reproduction is an important theme here. The cyborg is not the product of reproduction and it does not reproduce. It assembles parts; it is an assemblage, like Deleuze and Guattari's A Thousand Plateaus.

- - - - -
hacker anti-body

Whereas the cyborg literally incorporates the tension between self and body, the non-cyborg body loses out in the dystopic cyberworlds of William Gibson and other cyberpunk writers. In cyberspace, the mind is a commodity — a cowboy hacker is paid to travel in cyberspace with his consciousness, not his physical body — but the body itself (apart from the brain, the wetware force behind the mind) is disposable.

NOTE: Consciousness is the experience of embodiment.

- - - - -
meat

The cyberpunk disposability of the body as "meat" — if you lose yours, you can always get a new one — creates a social context in which the exploitation of these bodies carries no particular moral or ethical weight. It could be argued that prostitution, for example, no longer degrades the prostitute, or at least not in quite the same way. The technology separates her mind from her body so entirely that she may have no recollection of the event at all. Think about it. If you can't remember something, how do you know it really happened, especially when the only other witness has a very real interest in maintaining his silence, and your own?

NOTE: Cf. remembering and wishing in "Lust." The cyberpunk disconnection from the body means the absence or erasure of body memories.

- - - - -
virgin 2

Yet the technology is intrusive; it destabilizes the boundaries of person and world that we normally take for granted. Despite the hope that an agent can use the technology to her advantage, the danger remains: the body is a space to be colonized.

NOTE: The boundaries of the self fray.

- - - - -
maps and tracings

In place of the privileged meaning, a mapped identity emerges; connection is not about making links from one place to another, but about allowing the points of connection to say something about the spaces in

between. In this sense, the body becomes a site of dynamic mapping in and on which every point is potentially hot, live, generative, explosive — the body as hypertext.

NOTE: This is the rhizome. The distinction of maps and tracings comes directly from Deleuze and Guattari. However, a rhizome has no points, only lines.

- - - - -

- - - - -

intimacy/borders

Similarly, Molly's control of the seduction scene in Neuromancer reflects her ability to name and create (for) herself. This control stems in part from the way she uses the technology embedded in her own body to increase her power to arouse. Molly rewrites the technology in this scene in such a way that its effects are far from its intended use, and this re-vision of the potentialities of the machine to include the erotic underscores Molly's creative capacities in shaping the role technology plays as a part of her identity.

NOTE: Using a technology in a way other than its intended use is a tactical move, according to de Certeau. In this way the consumer breaks out of the pattern of passivity constructed by producers.

- - - - -

interface design

Unlike the essentialist critics of the past who implied or argued that one's biology must determine one's destiny, no one forces or delimits the relationship between the cyborg body and her self; "cyborg" is an identity she chooses on her own, with an eye toward its limits as well as it possibilities. (Essentializing the cyborg: imagine that! The cyborg body at the center of the inquiry — and not even a body, not the way one might usually think of it...no biology, save technology; yet no technology that is not socially produced, with a history, a semiotics, a significance that can be articulated and explained.)

NOTE: We might say that the cyborg actually resists identity, if identity is a stable self as opposed to a rhizome. The Patchwork Girl certainly resist identity. What we have is an affinity between parts, not a unified identity. Striated space is delimited. Smooth space is open and fluid.

- - - - -

isomorphism

NOTE: These are examples of analog technology. If we punch a typewriter key harder, we get a darker letter. The same does not happen with a computer keyboard.

"This signal may be the tap of a key, to be reproduced as the tap of a telegraph receiver at the other end; or it may be a sound transmitted and received through the apparatus of a telephone; or it may be the turn of a ship's wheel, received as the angular position of the rudder."

Patchwork Girl, by Shelley Jackson

As with *Cyborg*, due to the length of this hypertext (78 pages printed out in 10 point font), I have decided to copy on the lexias in which I have written notes and commentary.

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her

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title page
P A T C H W O R K G I R L;
OR,
A MODERN MONSTER

BY MARY/SHELLEY, & HERSELF
a graveyard,
a journal,
a quilt,
a story,
& broken accents

---
hidden figure

I know too that if what my studies instructed me of a coming resurrection is true (though I do not believe it, for have I not done in history and formed a human chain of one between life and death?) the restoration of bodily wholeness for the rest of you will rend me apart. Jennifer, Bronwyn and the rest will sit up from their graves in the little cemetery where I was born and where I will, where I now, where I have many times awaited my "death", and in front of them all I will come apart paragraph by paragraph. If all quotes remain tethered to their sources by however tenuous filaments, so my parts. My face will explode into fragments: eyeballs roll back to Tituba, teeth fly like sideways hail to the empty gums of Walter and Judith, sorting themselves as they go (molars to Judith, incisors to Walter, who ate only wine biscuits and blancmange). My fingers will heal themselves back onto the stumps of their various donors. I will be an afterimage glowing at the points of origin of my many flight paths. A Cheshire aftercat. An unchalked outline.

Metaphors will be called home for good. There will be no more likeness, only identity.

NOTE: She is talking about affinity vs identity.

---
earwigs

When I was "young" (though all my parts were old) I turned over a leaf and found a massed and crawling nest of earwigs. I dropped the leaf and backed away from these creatures that appalled me singly not at all.

What is dreadful about the plural? The swarm, the infestation. Is it that, without the necessary limits of any discrete entity, the swarm seems only accidentally, not essentially bounded in size? That it becomes a fragment of an infinite quantity, suggesting infinity despite its own accidental measurements, just because those measurements are accidental?

When I ran from the nest of earwigs, was I escaping a universe packed from seam to seam with them? Shiny pronged lozenges struggling against one another. Assembling into crystalline structures, insect architectures. The earwig as building block of matter, instead of the orderly playground of the atom, where the little balls roll and roll in circles. In place of the play of electrons: the quiver of segmented legs, twitching against their neighbors.

NOTE: The earwigs are a rhizome.
COMMENTARY
Patchwork Girl commentary
- - - - -
quotidian

Quotidian--ordinary, everyday--is an important theme in Quibbling.
- - - - -
bowsprit
This same image appears in Quibbling. "The wind from the Great Lake blew her hair in awkward clumps across her face. She turned directly into it, suddenly transforming to bowsprit maid, hair flying back, chin jutting" (onadune).
- - - - -
harpold
Harpold observes, "if you take apart a knot, there is nothing inside it. [. . .] We can turn around and around that moment and never close the wound it covers. [. . .] Knots hold together the bandages of the dismembered body, but they do not heal its wounds" (177-78). The text remains a dismembered corpus.
- - - - -
Haraway

- - - - -
ironic

Haraway:
AN IRONIC DREAM OF A COMMON LANGUAGE FOR WOMEN IN THE INTEGRATED CIRCUIT
This chapter is an effort to build an ironic political myth faithful to feminism, socialism, and materialism.

At the centre of my ironic faith, my blasphemy, is the image of the cyborg.

What kind of politics could embrace partial, contradictory, permanently unclosed constructions of personal and collective selves and still be faithful, effective - and, ironically, socialist-feminist?

- - - - -
affinity

Haraway:

Fission Impossible is the name of the affinity group in my town.(Affinity: related not by blood but by choice, the appeal of one chemical nuclear group for another, avidiy.)

The recent history for much of the US left and US feminism has been a response to this kind of crisis by endless splitting and searches for a new essential unity. But there has also been a growing recognition of another response through coalition - affinity, not identity.

This identity marks out a self-consciously constructed space that cannot affirm the capacity to act on the basis of natural identification, but only on the basis of conscious coalition, of affinity, of political kinship.

And of course, 'women's culture', like women of colour, is consciously created by mechanisms inducing affinity. The rituals of poetry, music, and certain forms of academic practice have been pre-eminent.

- - - - -

cut text

Normally, the writer places him or herself in the gaps between source texts, and this produces the illusion of seamless, consistent, monovocal text; that is to say, the fundamental multiplicity of any text is sutured together or sutured over with the writer's identity, ego, or ethos. Harpold claims, "Suturing describes a closing of the gap in language by the subject's assumption of the place of the gap" ("Threnody" 176). Harpold is referring here to the gaps between signifiers in any signifying chain. In other words, every time I quote another text I add a new signifier to the signifying chain of my own text. However, there are gaps between these signifiers--gaps which scholars are taught to suture over with their own writing and their own ethos, ideally producing a seamless text. In this way source texts are overcoded. Overcoding, or interpretation, is a reductive process; it is to reduce the multiplicity of the text to a single consistent meaning. To overcode is to construct another stratum over a text, to hold it down, as opposed to releasing the text through connection--or, in other words, creating what Deleuze and Guattari call a "line of flight" (3-4). Primary texts are compressed beneath many strata of secondary, critical texts. But rather than reducing or compressing a primary text, rhizomatic writing connects to and extends a text; therefore, the primary text/secondary text dichotomy text breaks down.

- - - - -

disjoint

Harpold: "Entering the web requires a confidence in a myth that presumes connections can be made between dismembered portions of a corpus that are, on an elementary level, disjoint" (Threnody 176).

- - - - -

fractals

Fractals and spirals are important in this text as well as in Quibbling.

- - - - -

reduction

Interpretation is reduction of multiplicity. We construct meaning by reducing uncertainty.

- - - - -

miscegenation

Unholy/unholly marriages create the miscegenation of discourses.

- - - - -

QUIBBLING, by Carolyn Guyer

Again, due to the length of this hypertext (156 pages printed out in 10 point font), I have decided to copy on the lexias in which I have written notes and commentary.

- - - - -
Title

- - - - -
lake

A cove of a lake is more comprehensible than the lake itself. Yet a cove does not exist separately from the lake, flowing out into and being filled by it.

Whatever we can understand about a cove may be held in one's hand, but the lake remains blessedly incomprehensible, coming out and going in.

- - - - -
moon-dew

If you heard that a witch you know uses moon-dew to lay incurable curses, you might think it was dew gathered in moonlight that she employs. But you would be wrong. No indeed, moon-dew is something else altogether, something rare and difficult to obtain. My question is, once a witch is able to procure some, how does she keep it? Powdered? Must be, how else to preserve it?

Well, let's see. I could simply put a link here, so you could find out. Some of you really like the mystery part don't you? But on the other hand, I'm a woman telling this, and I'd rather just say that moon-dew is the first menstrual blood of girls, collected during a lunar eclipse and traditionally used for laying incurable curses. Obviously, not often.

NOTE: The moon and sea are connected because of the tides.

- - - - -
Good!

NOTE: Heta and Cora/Jane talking? Yes.

"OK. Now about you. How are you and Priam doing? Are you alright?"

"Well, he never apologized after that – you remember – that last horrible fight, but it's like everything he's done since then has been an apology."

"GOOD!"

If this were film, imagine this is film, there would be laughing, just women's voices laughing quietly together, intermingled sound like the swirl of healing herbs in water, and maybe a camera shot from inside a room toward the door which leads to another room. Alright, alright, it's a European film.

- - - - -
and blood

NOTE: Spirals, women, blood

It's a bloody thing. As Erin Mouré says, "There is so much about blood." denial, denial, denial

And shit, there is so much about shit, same denial. My mother says that men don't like to hear women say shit, but she is of a different generation, isn't she?

Did you know, Mom, that it was once believed that people were born from a woman's intestines (the clear distinction between reproductive and digestive systems not yet made)? That labyrinths, and snakes, and spirals, and coils were symbols of femininity, the mother, operating principle of the world? that reading the intestines of an animal was divination unremoved from real experience? The blood the shit. It was OK back in those days.

Do you remember, Mom, the long days and nights we were together in the hospital, both concerned primarily with your shit? Literally, it was the fluid of life. You passed the stages of embarrassment quickly, though remained always aware of the irony of so much concentrated attention on the functions of your bowels. You almost died. We read your intestines every hour, divining, casting spells. We are real witches, your voice telling me now, in this distant present, of a new lover, of the Mediterranean Sea, the living proof.

- - - - -
son

The weakness of men strained through him. How little a mother can really do against the world's influence. He must have baseball, and especially coaches. He must ride bikes with the other boys who taunt each other to more and more dangerous stunts. (On the one hand,) he will listen to his mother who is shocked at a game called "Smear the Queer" and who lectures him about how wrong it is, insisting he call the game something else. He does what she says, but soon, of course, he realizes the impossibility - the absurdity - of following her directions, and goes back to using the real name of the game with his friends.

NOTE: Is this Gabe? Yes, the path browser gives the clue that lexia is talking about Gabe, Heta's son.

- - - - -
boy into man

She came to believe, sometime during Gabe's twenty-second year, that the real difference between a boy and a man could be signified by how well he understood his mother. As a child, Gabriel listened carefully to what she said, understood her meaning directly (even if later he decided what she suggested was untenable in the real world of other boys). All of his life, until recently, she had claimed him to be the only male who understood her without employing an interference shield. This was the "thing" Heta imagined existed between her words and men's minds. They always had their interference shields up. If they ever got what she was saying at all, it usually took time. The time required to make it their own idea, she supposed. But if they finally got it, that was alright with her. She didn't want to own anyone. Just talk with them, listen to and be heard.

Is this what women mean when they say, I don't know my own son anymore? She felt her heart to be finally and fully sundered when her words came flying back at her, blown by the righteous wind of a young man's indifference. This is what happens.

NOTE: Why is this lexia not linked to anything?

- - - - -

B.B. daze

Once while Agnes was visiting B.B., they were running some errands around the small New England town when Bea turned to Ag in snappish irritation and said "You seem to be in a daze. What's the matter?" And, indeed, Agnes had been lagging about a step behind, not attending very sharply. She was hurt by B.'s remark, and spent the afternoon alone trying to understand what a daze was. She finally came to think of it as being split among places. It was always hard to be in a new place with someone else, because new places require a little transitional adjustment, an exercise in orientation. If you could be by yourself in a new place, the known and unknown have a natural play, overlapping, merging into one synchronous experience. But if someone else is with you, the rhythm takes on a buzz, like static interference; thus the appearance of a daze. Do you see?

NOTE: Buzz-daze is Carolyn Guyer's term; it is about hypertext, feeling disoriented in HT.

teen angels

NOTE: from Agnes

7 Oct 81
Third day, and I can't believe I made it.

Layered everything on again, but the temp. kept dropping and the rain and wind never let up. Had to stop at every Comfort Station cum HoJo on the New York Thruway just to get my extremities unbent and moving again. At first, the stops were only 20 to 30 miles apart which was exactly how long I could stay on the bike with soaking wet gloves and the temperature hovering at freezing. Near Utica I thought I'd have to quit. Water got inside my boot and it was 45 miles to the next HoJo. Also my jeans were wet to the knees and the seams of my raingear had soaked through so the seat of my jeans were wet too. I was ready call it quits and call Bea when the Teen Angels appeared. A very young couple in biking gear, standing together in Howard's lobby. I know god sent them. They were going almost the same place as me. They thought it would only take a couple more hours (I knew better, but still, HOPE!) They helped me tape plastic bags over dry gloves, and then fastened my chin strap for me. The three of us took Albany rush hour literally by storm. Cold, rain, ice, and gloom, nothing to it!

Ah, god, 16 hours for the day. Bea's landlady had chicken soup with matzah for us.

- - - - -

beloved bowls

During her first long winter of learning pottery, Agnes also discovered beloved bowls. These were two or more hand-pinched bowls made from the same ball of clay, one to keep, the other to give to someone you love. Beloved bowls suited her sense for ritual so perfectly Agnes set off on a long series of them, years of them.

Her first pair of beloveds was for herself and B.B. She used white porcelain inlaid with pale celadon and formed them after the Japanese model of seasonal tea bowls. She made them Spring, and named them

Sea Willow. They emerged from the kiln a satiny bone white with delicate waves of green all through, and each had a small pink "kiss of the kiln god" on the outside, one of those accidents of firing considered to be a blessing.

Two weeks after sending Bea's to her, Agnes held in her hands a letter telling what it was like for her friend to receive the bowl. It had arrived the same day Beatrice returned from the Boston hospital where she learned her husband of three months was dying of cancer. She was completely alone, no friends to hold her, except now the curve of the bowl.

NOTE: The bowl is feminine, curved.

- - - - -

cora per Ha

NOTE: Could be Priam speaking, if Priam is Cora's brother.

You've probably noticed Cora sometimes has a small facial tic. Well, it's just a minor nerve disorder now, but when she was a child it was much more serious, and in second grade she had a grand mal seizure on the school playground right in the midst of the crowd of children who always surrounded the nun reigning over recess. She told me not long ago that she can still remember how it felt rising back to consciousness, the outerspace sound in her ears, the nightmarish view of dozens of faces peering down at her from the sky, the hot scrape of asphalt beneath her bare palms and calves, and Sister Michael Marie, looming over her, fright in every pore. I remember this nun, I can just imagine her being all black alarm like ink spilled on today's book report.

- - - - -

nun and priest

Note: Punished by silence, which is white

He had not called for many days. Punishing, she was sure, though he would have convinced himself it was for some other reason. Perhaps something romantic - like proving that their love could survive silence. He would like this reason. He would not like the idea that he was punishing her. But the Jesuit in him (this mark, a tatoo, or the irreversible bleach of baptism on one's soul) did indeed punish.

While she waited, she kept thinking about the first time they had made love. What it was like to tuck into his body, be enveloped by him. How she laughed with utter delight at his shocked expression and the stern, ridiculous word, "Naughty!" when she had ventured the notion of a nun and priest making love - and then brought it to life by performing it with vigor. She believed he was delighted, too, with her delight and animation.

NOTE: The nun and priest is a reference to the other narrative, the 15th century narrative, which Priam writes.

Still he did not call, and she knew perfectly well the answers to her own questions: where is he? why this?

- - - - -

and silence

It lasted forever. Each day a long slow drag of razor-edged ice, like broken glass, drawn through her skin. The kind of pain you get outside of and watch in amazement, all the while feeling it completely in slicing spasms. She was two women, keeping herself company against the white.

NOTE: white silence

- - - - -
forbidden

She frequently dressed as if she had a nun's habit in mind. Black and very dark blue were the favored colors. Or razor white. The fabric never clung, but draped, describing form by intimation, compelling the wearer to subtle, fluid movement. It was the tension made by apparent modesty dramatically clothed that gave her a peculiar sensuality. Like a child cutting her eyes beneath heavy lashes, or a nun's sidelong glance across her shoulder.

NOTE: She resembles a lake, dark, with fluid movements.

- - - - -
waves at play

Waves coming in to shore can behave quite strangely. I suppose there are patterns, maybe even names for them, but they never seem quite the same to me. One time I saw them actually trying to leap forwards and backwards over each other like children tumbling, learning how to play that game.

NOTE: This seems like a metaphor for hypertext. Jackson compares HT to hopscotch.

- - - - -
daily weave

Through her days, spent mostly without his presence, Heta played with seeing through the Priam filter. What would he think of this person? Really, Priam? I don't know, I think he's not so simple as that. He would say such-and-such about that situation. Oh, you're such a cynic, she'd laugh, that's not the only thing that could happen you know.

But always she played this game in order to compare Priam's colors with her own. Conversations with him, he not physically there, but literally there. One cannot make a life without knowing the daily detail. The smell of a Sunday morning, shared. In bed together at night, the sound of surf through an open window. Tome-like glances in crowded places. She tried to fill the lacunae she felt, bringing him to her, living with him, then sending the fabric back to him in the mail, or over the phone. Little by little, bit by bit, their life together filled, the patterns becoming more complex. Still, it was not enough.

NOTE: "Little by little, bit by bit, their life together filled, the patterns becoming more complex." This is a description of reading this hypertext. This is the quotidian stream.

- - - - -
bmk/cora's visit
Date: 06-15-89 23:01:23 EST
To: PriaM
Subj: Cora

From: Heta22

What kind of "little disagreement?" I bet she doesn't get over things all that easily. I know I only met her that once, but she seemed fragile to me. Or maybe just very vulnerable. What did she say about the program?

NOTE: Are Jane and Cora the same person? Yes, Jane was her name before she became a nun.

- - - - -
bmk/the hazard
Date: 07-19-90 20:30:03 EST
To: PriaM
Subj: good question
From: Heta22

well, it seems to me she's already given up her peace by loving him at all. They're headed for trouble no matter what. If she stays, she won't regain what she had. Nor can Henry stay if Margaret does. They can't be in the same abbey as they are, and not love. Nor can they stay there and love. People are alerted to them.

Do I understand your question? You know they're going to marry, but you're worried that Henry will abuse her in some way afterwards? Depends on what you mean by abuse. He has every sanction in the world to abuse her physically. It was *recommended* back then. But even if he doesn't do that, he might become silent and withdrawn – though really, he's no Abelard. And besides they would have to go far away to start over, so they would probably turn more toward each other.

How can we know? That's the hazard, isn't it?

NOTE: Guyer is getting at gender differences here, but it also relates to hypertext--not knowing what's coming next.

- - - - -
bmk/I know
Date: 06-12-90 21:35:12 EST
To: Heta22
Subj: re the hard kind
From: PriaM

File: M&H12jun90.sit

yeah, it's what i've been telling myself too. here are latest revisions. decided to leave in some of the words and phrasing in parens. at least for this week. who knows. very risky. never get published. but in switching the whole thing over to hypertext, all these alternatives i want to leave in begin to work. though now, in this form, it *for sure* will never get published. who in hell publishes computer fiction anyway? let alone reads it.

Catherine's deep into a project at work right now. I showed her some of this, and she was appreciative. But she's preoccupied, not here a lot - even when she is - so we haven't discussed Mag & Hen much.

NOTE: HT allows multiple narrative paths, alternatives.

- - - - -

"What's wrong? You look in a daze." Wert eyed Heta across the top of his sandwich. They had taken her to eat the moment she had arrived for this, her first visit. "You don't seem yourself."

She looked sideways at him and tilted her head. "What would you like me to be? I'll be whatever you want." It was an automatic response, self-protective, not really meant as a jibe, but Priam started teasing with "Oooo" and a smirking grin. His friend was blushing and Heta was thrown off balance even more than before. She looked at Werther and in a quiet voice that tried to make up for the misunderstood remark, said "I'm not sure where I am yet. Give me a little time, that's all."

NOTE: She is in a buzz-daze.

- - - - -

news

They ate c-store sandwiches while sitting in folding lawn chairs on the little concrete slab of a "patio" outside Heta's room. They could watch the lake from there.

"No, uh-uh, The Academy's co-ed. They have boys now, for a long time." This bit of surprising information drew an exasperated gesture from Heta.

NOTE: They're talking about St. Mary's College. The girl wants to be a nun.

"Another one down. Now that we've gotten to be so 'equal,' it seems we have no place of our own at all anymore. We know they don't really have us as equals but sometimes I think in order to make it seem so they actually subsumed us, took everything away. Really. I mean it. No schools of our own, no grace in our families, just lots of new little men, shoulder pads in place, bows tied up tight at our necks, and skirts - SKIRTS! They've turned skirts into the dirtiest unfeminine thing of all. Like yellow stars, they must be worn now by 'professional women' to identify and place them immediately."

The girl leaned forward, she was not used to this kind of talk.

- - - - -

power

"But French is such a beautiful language. And so many people do know French. What about them?"

"Well, what? Are they going to be insulted?"

Heta couldn't help smiling. "Yes, I guess that's the idea. But you know, some people do try to remedy this problem. They put footnotes, or endnotes, sometimes parentheses right in the text."

"Still feels like 'Oh, I know you don't know this, so I'm going to put the answer here for you.'"

"Well? There's no way to do it right? What else is left?"

"I don't know. All I know is that whenever I read the books they tell us at school, I get mad. But when I try to see what I'm mad about, nothing's there."

NOTE: Is Heta talking to her son Gabe?

- - - - -
ditching it

"You really ditch it with that one. Never have to go beyond admitting you're wrong: can't help it, by definition, male condition, all that."

"Well even it were possible for me to understand, to grasp, so to speak, it wouldn't be possible for me to write it. Hegemony being what it is, no matter how I write my truth, I write it, so she will always be in relation to a male authority. No escaping it, as long as the masculine voice is the authoritative voice, he can't write a real and equal woman."

"So I guess what I should be hounding you about is why you aren't using hypertext."

"Hardly. You said yourself men have owned this from its inception. You know perfectly well it's more difficult than that."

NOTE: Who is speaking? Is she talking about the feminist possibilities of hypertext? Yes.

- - - - -
bathing

Her showers were long and ritualistic, probably those of a tub bather in a different time. She used loofa, and facial exfoliant, and liquid lavendar, she sanded her feet, washed her hair in herbs, and simply stood under the stream imagining a waterfall, or someone massaging her shoulders, her back, her thighs, she could easily reach orgasm in a shower if she wanted to.

Hilda needed her evening shower she said to wash away the day. Her days were like that. She hadn't thought yet about the body and soul really being one, but she would have a friend one day who would assure her this was true. It was then she would understand another of her reasons for long showers.

NOTE: Hilda resembles Margaret. Both look forward to bathing at the end of the day. Margaret might have been a pagan like Hilda if Europe hadn't been Christianized.

- - - - -
more Help

Many readers of hyperfiction find it easier to orient themselves in a work by first reading through the default or "automatic" path if one has been set up by the originating author. I recommend this kind of initial approach as much or more for finding one's own reading rhythm in a multiple fiction as for discovering an author's intentions.

There are other ways to go about it, however. In this Storyspace Reader you can move around directly in the topography of the text. That is, click on the title of a box you want to look at, and then click the "pop" tool – in the center of the directional arrows – to open it (this same tool closes the text box). You can go as deep as you like in this way by double-clicking in the lower portion of any text box, which opens an area where more boxes are held. Remember that each box has two functions: it can contain text and it can hold more boxes.

If you choose to read Quibbling in this way, you will eventually find a number of boxes with no links going in or out. They can only be reached by exploring the territory of the text. At this depth, fictional warp begins to turn back on itself, the curve we're always looking for.

NOTE: The warp is the lengthwise yarn or fiber that is crossed by the woof.

- - - - -

color theory

Additive system primaries: red-orange, green, blue-violet
(these are the three kinds of cone cells in the human eye)

applies to color created by beams of light, also known as generated light. ex: color television, stained glass, color computer screens, etc.

together the primaries produce white light

additive secondaries: magenta, cyan, yellow

Subtractive system primaries: magenta, cyan, yellow
describes the color effects that result when light is reflected from an opague object

together they produce black

subtractive secondaries: orange, green, violet

NOTE: Primaries and Secondaries are reversed for both systems creating a mirror image

Color Qualities: hue, saturation, and value

Hue is the color (red, blue, yellow, etc.)

Saturation refers to strength of hue and has three variations: tint, shade, and tone
Tint refers to a hue mixed with much white (ex., pink)
Shade refers to a hue mixed with black
Tone refers to a hue mixed with grey

Value refers to where a hue falls on a grey scale. White is at the top, making tints high value, and black is at the bottom make shades low value.

---

info taken from The New Dyer

COLORLESS: etiolated

- - - - -

will explain

NOTE: Agnes talking about Will.

He plays with death all the time and can talk a good suicidal. We really do want each other, ache and long for each other in the best old folk song tradition. Star-crossed love and all that. But if I were to leave, I know I would not go to him. If I made that kind of drastic decision, it would have to be totally selfish. I'd have to do it for me me me. I don't mean he'd be excluded from my life. But he would have to come to me. I'd go someplace where the art is hot and heavy and I could learn something. NY, Chicago, or LA. Or even Europe. I'd love to have him with me. He is an artist himself. Mostly in music. But everything else, too. Like me. We are both Capricorns, but I think I have more Air. He is so Saturnine. Ah jeez he gets me hot.

We haven't made love for a year. He got himself a case of Herpes. What do I do with that?

- - - - -
classic problem

NOTE: from Will

30 Sep 80
Dear Ag -
Here we go. I'll start ANOTHER LETTER. How cum the things I envy are never mine? HA! I'll bet you say the same thing. Oh well, you know that I really feel you're the only one who has ever known me and I'll never have you so why live? I really hate to admit it but our's is really the classic Romantic problem of the ages and whats worse is ah forget it.

Something else funny. There's 2 things. - Now I underline stuff about death in books which is a pattern for people that "do it" also in colleges you look for the people that crack. It happens all the time up here even a guy I knew. But I hate to fit into groups and the people that kill themselves in college is a group.

I should come up with a new angle. How about MAN FALLS INTO RIVER OF ICE CHUNKS WHILE JOGGING OVER BRIDGE. naw I'm teasing. wow. I just realized I'm not really writing you a letter I'm just thinking on paper.

NOTE: There may be a time difference between this narrative and others in this text. This letter is from 1980. Priam and Heta's letters are from 1989-90. Bea could be Beatrice the nun; she just becomes a nun later.

- - - - -
classic ltr

30 Sep 80
Dear Ag -
Here we go. I'll start ANOTHER LETTER. How cum the things I envy are never mine? HA! I'll bet you say the same thing. Oh well, you know that I really feel you're the only one who has ever known me and I'll never have you so why live? I really hate to admit it but our's is really the classic Romantic problem of the ages and whats worse is ah forget it.

NOTE: From Bea. This alludes to Henry and Margaret's relationship, and possibly Heta and Priam's.

- - - - -
safe gift

Print throwaways and offtakes from the presses where he earned his living. Beautiful things he knew Agnes would enjoy and appreciate, and maybe most important, keep. He often gave her things in order to keep himself safe.

NOTE: about Will

- - - - -
iron man

A large iron nut and bolt picked up from the railroad tracks on one of his midnight meanderings. The form appealed to him, and he thought of her instantly when he held it. A long cylindrical stem with a domed head on it, and threaded onto the base, a massive square nut that allowed the whole thing to stand upright, at a slight angle. He spent the entire night cleaning it, and sanding it, and painting it in many layers of bright red enamel. He was genuinely startled when she remarked on it's blatant sexuality. He hadn't noticed. Innocence of a satyr.

NOTE: Will may be associated with the color red, the color of iron.

- - - - -
pt/will3

She'd heard of curved penises, but his was the only one she'd personally known; long, at least eight inches, and slender, like the man himself, with the subtle upward arc of a scimitar.

NOTE: Curved rail and curved penises. Curved female body, bowls. Will is associated with sensuousness.

- - - - -
sister

Folded newspaper brought down hard on the table. "No!" Priam clenched the paper, pointing it at his sister Jane. "You're wrong. This isn't your convent school. These kids need to learn how to get along out there, in the real world outside a godfucking ghetto." Jane turned her head away slightly. She was only here on a visit, hadn't intended to argue with Priam. She knew he was now at the point of being cruel, something he always forgave himself for if it was done in the heat of an argument. She could continue to press her point about the young men, boys really, in his program; she could just get up and leave the room, or she could wait quietly for the stripe to fall. Whatever she chose, the rest of the afternoon would be ugly.

"We don't need some Cora-come-lately stepping in telling us how to run this program." Her head dropped and she wished for a veil to hide the pain. Priam turned and stalked from the room. Everything went white for a while.

NOTE: Everything went silent. Cora may be Priam's sister, and she may be the link between Priam and Heta. Heta meet Cora right before she became a nun.

- - - - -
cora jane by bro

Cora – of course it was Jane then – was just too young, only six you know, she was a year younger than the others in her class, she was too young to realize after she had the seizure on the playground that it was something that would mark her for the rest of her school days. She was always outside everything anyway, always shy and awkward, I watched her gradually move more and more inward with her books. Oh, I don't mean she was completely friendless. There were one or two girls, on the edges like herself, who clung

together with her all through grade school. Actually, when Cora conceived the idea of becoming a nun, no one should have been surprised. She already was one. Personally, I think she believed it would be how she could show everyone that they didn't really know her. That she could be dramatic and central. Not even movie stardom would have the cachet of a convent. I swear, I think, even then, she believed being a nun was the epitome of womanhood. She secretly loved the grand gesture.

NOTE: The name of this lexia indicates that Cora/Jane's brother is Priam.

- - - - -
falling robe

black crepe robe falling slightly open
he sees white
lunule
first curve of dune
promising in the dark reaches
knolled promontory

NOTE: Woman's body as topography.

- - - - -
birthmark

The shoreline, in deep winter, row upon row of ice dunes, in the late afternoon light, looking more like a seasonal gathering of nunataks, or echoing queues, arty video, of Catherine's breasts as she lay on her back, arm thrown behind her head.

Strange thing to think here in Heta's yard. But these ice peaks are not like Heta's breasts, at any time, lying back, sitting up, or kneeling over me. Her breasts are more fluid, almost too soft, and sometimes long, like drops, when she leans over, or like twin crescent moons when she lies propped on one arm. Heta may love all this ice, feel compelled in some strange way by it, but she could never be Durga, or the Ice Queen. The port wine stain which pours down her inner right thigh tells all.

NOTE: Who is speaking? Priam? Yes, Priam. Catherine seems to be Priam's ex-lover/ex-wife.

- - - - -
astride

Margaret used Henry's extended foot and arm to lift herself onto the horse behind him. Gathering and dividing her skirts to fall evenly on each side, she swung one leg over the horse blanket and sat both firmly astride and modestly covered. She had only to hold lightly to his tunic for their evening ride home from the fields. After working each day of the harvest by his side, and then returning to the abbey as the sun disappeared, Margaret would sometimes have the fleeting sensation of an ordinary [quotidian] life.

NOTE: Margaret is a nun, I think. Yes.

- - - - -
widder

They watched, two interlopers on a hill overlooking the village. They had been walking and collecting herbs for the abbey when a crowd of people gathering below took their attention away from each other and the task at hand. A long procession of men carrying what appeared to be a stripped tree trunk made their way together with their burden to an open grassy mound at the edge of the village. The men then began setting the tree into a hole obviously dug for this purpose at the center of the hillock. Margaret and Henry glanced at each other in silent recognition, then stared again at the activity below. The tree trunk was strung around with flowers and herbs, and from the top where a plume of branches had been left uncut, flowed long scarves or ribbons of red and white. When this gay pole was firmly in place, the crowd began to dance around it strewing flowers and boughs of greenery all about the mound of grass. "Perhaps we should return to the abbey," said Margaret. But she did not move her eyes away from the celebration, and Henry remained very still as well. "I've never seen one," he murmured.

NOTE: Pagan maypole celebration, disapproved of by Christians. Thoroughly phallic. cf. the cigar box.

- - - - -
mag jrnl 7-7

Jrnl July 7, 1990

These two, again. Margaret insists to Henry, as Catherine does to me, that she does not need children of her own. There are other ways to live a life. How can I disagree? Maybe Henry can, back there in those days. But I cannot persist with Catherine. It is utterly against the rules now. We cannot say that a woman's destiny is biological. But I don't mean that. I don't have children of my own either, so can only remember the things people have told me, try to build some truth from it. How often I've seen the evidence that parents can redeem the pain - even the deep horrors - of their childhood by making things different for their own children. It's the ongoing years of effort to right things that change who we are. Oh, my Catherine.

NOTE: Priam's journal

- - - - -
mag jrnl 7-15

Jrnl July 15, 1990

Henry is obviously moving toward the thought of marriage. It would mean terrible sacrifice for them both. Perhaps most for Margaret. She loves him, but has accepted conventual life, finds peace there. How can she know that it might be better for her to remain than to run off with her man? She is no Heloise after all.

But Henry would be good to her, he wouldn't turn the brute. Would he?

NOTE: Priam is comparing himself to Henry.

- - - - -
mag jrnl 7-16
Priam's journal

Jrnl July 16, 1990

Must be careful here in imposing my own memories of leaving on Henry. His situation is very different. There is far less similarity between his potential departure and my own than there is between Margaret and Catherine, or even between Margaret and Heta. His is a different age, the circumstances not even close. He loves Margaret, his only reason. For me, it was a vaster dissatisfaction, and a matter of personal, ethical rift with the Church hierarchy. Henry knows nothing of such, just that he loves Margaret and must leave in order to have her.

NOTE: Is Priam an ex-priest? Yes.

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mag jrnl 7-21

Jrnl July 21, 1990

Again and again in the writing of this, I think of the connections with both of them. Catherine, and how she's like Margaret in some ways, and indeed, how Henry and I are similar in relation to them each. Admittedly we take a protective stance, she is so injured, so vulnerable, but also a kind of reverence for what she knows thereby. I know that should be respect, not reverence, but I must be honest. It is reverence for her pain.

But then, Heta. When this started, it was she I turned to, for her artistry I suppose, because I could trust her thinking. Trust her distance? Oh, Heta. I don't think I want it to be that way. Yet it is, and does not, can not change. Even the sharing of this writing must be done in distance, in physical absence. The constraint on our love, no less than medieval.

NOTE: Is Catherine Priam's ex-wife, or even his current wife?

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mag jrnl 8-29

Jrnl Aug 29, 1990

Sometimes writing this stuff is like being in a daze. the shifted, split focus; the overlay and interchangeability of reality and invention. Altered state? jeez. No wonder they all drink.

NOTE: Reference to "buzz-daze." Priam is writing a hypertext.

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piano time

She could never keep classical music straight. Which piece was this? Maybe the dread Czerny? Instead, she would remember how hesitantly he had begun playing, but how bravely he had offered in the first place. They sat in the acoustic recital room, Cy at the piano, Hilda primly seated in a straightbacked chair, an audience of one, rapt attention on her face, ignoring the embarrassed smile on his.

"It's OK. Just warm up a little. Everyone has to warm up." She watched his fingers move on the keys, thinking of the time she'd been told that people who watched a guitarist's fingers were rude. She always watched anyway.

He played. She watched, seeing he was a sensitive pianist when she wasn't there. When he stopped and turned on the bench to face her, she wanted him to play more, but waited. "You know I'm probably in love

with you," he said, "but I don't think I can love you. I'm very afraid of hurting you. I think I'm crazy. Someday I'll come looking for you and you won't be there."

Hilda stood up. "I'll always be here." As she turned to leave, her turquoise skirt swung wide.

NOTE: Swinging, flowing skirts are a recurrent leitmotif. They are analogous to the waves on Lake Michigan. This is a kind of dance; it is rhythmic. Waves have crests and troughs. Think of sound waves. Music is patterned sound waves. Waves exist in space-time. Maybe HT is about going from particles to waves, as in quantum mechanics. Particles or points are placemarkers along the wave or Möbius Strip. Masculinity and femininity are such placemarkers. They are resting places (topoi).

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mother/father

NOTE: This is the Möbius Strip and a spiral. This is the prairie.

This is the land of extremes, the place where existence twists. Here it is the empty paradox unbearable to human agency. The people who lived here for so long did not resist the truth, and so erected no megaliths. But lately, another people, pale and determined, descendants from the land of eternal megaliths, a people who would eventually produce cities of towering edifice, have here thrown up seed-filled phalli, white and stolid in their own image, against the unacceptable otherness. The horror of separation.

Mother and Father. Earth and Sky. Like children, we try to make bridges between them, bind them together, never understanding the inextricable bond of difference. We sigh with relief and pleasure when they hold hands. We sigh. The comfort of rain, joy of glinting pond.

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COMMENTARY

This is my commentary.

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cast

Cast of characters:

Priam-- lover of Heta, art teacher at Catholic boys school, Jane/Cora's brother
Heta--artist, lives part-time at Lake, teaches art part-time in Cheyenne.
Cy--piano player, loves Hilda
Hilda--Cy's lover, works in office, seems to be a pagan--does spiral dance
Bea/B.B./Beatrice--friend/correspondent of Agnes and Hilda, bisexual, becomes a nun and seduces Cora
Cora/Jane--nun, seduced by Beatrice, friend of Heta, from St. Mary's College? Priam's sister?
Gabe--Heta's son? Art student
Ben--Heta's son-in-law; Bridget husband
Bridget--Heta's daughter; knits for husband Ben
Jake/Jacob--Angela's husband, pilot, doesn't read
Angela--Jake's wife, bookish, friend of Bea
Agnes--artist, once worked in a bookstore, friend of Bea
Will--lover/husband of Agnes, 26 yr old musician/artist
Margaret--nun/cellaress in medieval hypertext narrative, written by Priam, based on historical figures in 15th cent.
Henry--priest/chaplain who works with Margaret in the fields
Catherine--ex-wife of Priam?
Werther/Wert--friend of Priam (obvious allusion to Afternoon, a story)

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making sense

How does a reader make sense of this HT? What is to be done with it?

I don't feel empowered when I read Quibbling. I feel more like I'm in a buzz-daze. When we are in a buzz-daze we have to reorient; we have to change our customary, automatic way of dealing with reality.

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quibble

To quibble is to evade the point of an argument by caviling about words. To cavil is to raise trivial and frivolous objections. Women have, of course, been characterized as trivial and frivolous, as well as incapable of engaging in a rational argument. Quibbling interrupts the logical stream of an argument.

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flicker

The background is the quotidian; yet the quotidian is subject to endless interruptions. The quotidian is not a steady state, but more of a flickering experience. Interruptions in the gaze produce the flickering sensation. But how does something come to the foreground? Patterns come to the foreground. A pattern is essentially a recurrence--a regular, often predictable recurrence. The unexpected or surprising comes to the foreground. An interruption is a pause, and pauses are necessary in any conversation. It seems that the foreground tends to be absorbed into the background, or accommodated, familiarized. The unfamiliar is the foreground, and the familiar is the background. The quotidian is also familiar. In any text, the familiar forms the background and the unfamiliar moves to the foreground. Reading is the process of setting the unfamiliar against the background of the familiar.

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topography

There are topographical patterns in this HT: Lake Michigan, other lakes, Rocky Mountains, Flint Hills, Kansas, Wyoming plains, Missouri Hills, New England, river in Midwest . . . The reading is nomadic, like the characters. Places/topoi are important. This is a radically different way of reading or writing a text, as compared to the conventional plot, which is ultimately singular and focused on a single event at a single time and single place (e.g., Afternoon).

The text resembles a fractal.

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quotidian

Quotidian--everyday, ordinary. Heta's life, or just Heta, is analogous the quotidian waves of Lake Michigan, which she lives by. This hypertext is quotidian. Women deal with the quotidian, while men are interested in, or even obsessed by, the heroic.

The hero narrative has a center, a single event that unifies the narrative. In other words, the hero narrative is phallic. The quotidian narrative does not have a center; it is multiple and dispersed; there is no single event that serves as a focal point for the narrative, as Afternoon does with the auto accident. (Landow 207)

The singular, heroic event defines the heroic character; in James Joyce's short stories it is the epiphany. The hero is also a loner. His heroic quest is personal and individual. It is often about separating from the community, the mother and all females. By contrast, quotidian reality is social. The daily round of the traditional woman is social; she is enmeshed in domestic and community relations.

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interrupt

A further difference between the heroic and the quotidian concerns interruptions. The daily life of "woman" (that is, the maternal, heterosexual woman) is continually interrupted--by crying babies, visitors, telephone calls, unexpected errands, etc. The stereotypic, or paradigmatic, man's life is much less subject to

interruption. He may work for 8 hours without significant interruptions. Thus, the discontinuous narrative may be more quotidian and "feminine," while the heroic narrative is unified, unilinear, and continuous. Men's and women's work, in other words, is reflected in the different narrative structures.

The interrupted, nomadic life may be characterized as a curved life. It is indirect. There is curvature between point A and point B because the background of one's life is in motion.

Traditional "women's work" is repetitious and cyclical as well.

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spheres

By bringing men into "woman's sphere," we may place him in a more discontinuous environment or life-narrative. The separate spheres, or the public/private split, is in large part a creation of industrial capitalism, which kept the woman at home while sending the man to work outside the home. However, even in ancient Greece there were strictly enforced separate spheres for men and women. But maybe this was only true in the urban centers like Athens.

When theorizing about quotidian and heroic narratives, it is important to not reinscribe oppressive gendered binaries; this is why men must be brought into traditionally feminine spheres. We should not simply celebrate the discontinuous, interrupted quality of the traditional woman's work and life.

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familiar

Artists make the familiar unfamiliar, making the old new and surprising--so familiar and so strange. Perhaps something is foregrounded when the flicker "catches" on it a moment longer than usual.

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Who's Talking

In literary hypertexts we often do not know who is talking, or rather whose words we are reading. Why is this? Does it force the reader to attend to the language rather than the speaker? The speaker/language (or writer/text) link is gone. We can't rely on the ethos of the speaker or envision the speaker--at least not until we figure out who is speaking. And if male voices have more authority that female voices, it may be in the interest of women to confuse conceal the speaker's gender or even to conceal the speaker's identity entirely, at least for part of a narrative.

Ethos is deeply gendered, inasmuch as good women have traditionally not spoken in public. So Quintillian's image of the good man speaking well does not fit for women rhetors. Ethos is problematic for women writers and speakers.

This has something to do with the HT practice of weaving texts together, mixing voices.

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curves

The curve is a prominent motif in this hypertext. It is very productive metaphorically and analogically. Spirals and cycles are closely associated with curves. Also the crescent of the moon, the curve of the bull's horns . . . Essentially, the curve is feminine. And hypertext may considered feminine insofar as it curves back on itself. It is recursive. The Möbius strip is a spiral.

Curves are best perceived tactilely. Seeing them doesn't fully account for them. Thus Irigaray says that women know best by touch.

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contiguity

By adding links the reader creates contiguity in a hypertext. I am able to bring two lexias closer together or create a whole network of lexias, as I have done with the text link for curve. This is paratactic (w)reading. Parataxis creates a nomadic reading experience. Deleuze and Guattari speak of "nomadic thought" (Landow 208). The reader wanders through the text.

Items that are spatially contiguous are often assumed to have a logical connection or to "go together."

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nomadic

Quibbling is a nomadic narrative; it does not have an Aristotelian plot (Landow 208). This is interesting because Heta and Priam both live somewhat nomadic lives, taking temporary teaching positions. The nomadic life is subject to many interruptions.

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Guyer's words

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smooth & striated

From Guyer's essay "Buzz-Daze Jazz and the Quotidian Stream."

I want to jump over to a sidebar of cerebration which a friend loaned to me during the writing of Quibbling. It's an essay called "The Smooth and the Striated" by Deleuze and Guattari, a couple of those French thinkers found to be irresistible by most American hypertext literati. In this work, the masters of a thousand plateaus gave me something for which I had been looking almost fifteen years. A way of holding a perverse knot that Agnes and many of the characters in the fiction would continue to worry. It has to do with, god help us, the non-existence of abstracted dualities. By this I mean all the usual, traditional representations: Female/Male, Night/Day, Death/Life, Earth/Sky, Intuitive/Rational, Individual/Communal. The list goes on as long as consciousness itself. We make these things up! The terms "smooth" and "striated," as used by Deleuze and Guattari in their essay, are an attempt to generalize the easy concept of polarity in order to make it useful in trying to understand what really happens, that is, the constant transformations of one pole into the other. What is important to recognize is not the impossible duality of the poles, but what happens between them.

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space-time

From "Buzz-Daze":

You might say it's What We Learn, what we actually experience in space-time as we conceive ourselves, as we conceive space-time. "Smooth" and "striated," then - representing poles that don't exist - can be understood in only quick strokes of words, nothing that settles too soon or stays too long. Pierre Boulez, who actually coined the terms for a musical model, said, ". . . in a smooth space-time one occupies without counting, whereas in a striated space-time one counts in order to occupy." Now here is an image I can grasp immediately. It correlates directly with my own sense as an artist that the process of creating ourselves always involves two polar events: Acceptance and Control, that is, occupying without counting, and counting in order to occupy.

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waves

From "Buzz-Daze"

We are, all of us, creative beings. But what we create isn't, by itself, what keeps us tumbling. Learning How is the combinative impelling force, where refrain arises. Always the reason to learn something is to learn something else. Closure, resolution, achievement, the objects of our lives are inventions that operate somewhat like navigational devices, placemarkers if you will. We go on like waves unsure of the shore,

sometimes leaping backwards into the oncoming, but always moving in space-time, always finding someplace between the poles that we invent, shifting, transforming, making ourselves as we go.

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BuzzDaze
From "Buzz-Daze":

Maybe we should go back to Agnes's problem about being in a daze. She seems to think that being by herself in a new place has a predictable rhythm, sort of like waves on a shore, "occupying space" washes in and washes out. Nice rhythm. We like this, no problem. But when B.B. was with her, there was some sort of striated imposition on her daze, a buzz, or interference of complex mixtures, B.B. insisting on Agnes's attention, directing her presence as it were (isn't this what always happens when we're with other people? that's when things get complicated).

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HildaRob
From "Buzz-Daze":

I think of this interchange as a fairly commonplace occurrence, a situation where people are in a sense collaborative artists, people creating themselves, Hilda and Robert, in narrative juxtaposition to one another. That's inside the story. In the literary lump of the fiction, the thing that doesn't exist without a reader, the reader/writer creates Hilda, Robert, and herself, in space-time. It is exactly the same process used by any writer of a literary lump.
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quotidian
From "Buzz-Daze"

The paradoxical nature of buzz-daze, of the complex mixtures of polar impulse, predictably becomes less of an enigma when we don't look too hard, that is, when we go along every day turning fragments into wholes, the quotidian stream,
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contour
From chapter 3

The problem with the objectivist paradigm is that the still spatial background does not exist. Space-time moves. We might envision a person trying to draw a straight line between two points on a chalkboard that slips and slides under the pressure of the chalk. Such a line would be, at best, curved, rather than the paradigmatic "shortest distance between two points." One is reminded here of Joyce's concept of the "hypertext contour" as "the figure of changing change" (Othermindedness 43).
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prelude
"Wipe your hand across your mouth, and laugh;
The worlds revolve like ancient women
Gathering fuel in vacant lots."
T.S. Eliot, from "Prelude IV"
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metonymy
We might say that entities or concept that are associated by metonymy are part of the same rhizome, or they are linked rhizomatically. Metonymy means "using one entity to refer to another that is related to it" (Lakoff and Johnson 35). Related and associated may be taken as synonymous here. If I were to say "hypertext is a spiral," I would be using metaphor. But if I say "hypertext may be associated with a spiral," I am using metonymy. I am placing hypertexts and spirals in a contiguous relation. In metaphor, one terms

absorbs the other—e.g., hypertext is absorbed into the spiral; it becomes a spiral. The same cannot be said for metonymy, where two terms are given equal status.

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color

The characters in Quibbling are also associable with colors (Figure 4.?). Given the artistic theme of this text, colors take on special significance, as Guyer makes clear in the lexia "color theory" and also in "kites," which has text links to many lexias labeled by color. Many of these lexias contain folkloric and mythic references to colors. It is unusual in Storyspace hypertexts for two or more lexias to have the same label, but in Quibbling no less than ten lexias are labeled "red," as one can easily learn by pressing F9. Four lexias labeled are "green." By pressing Ctrl-F and then selecting color from the keywords, one can find a few of the many lexias that concern color. I have added color to the keywords list, but I have not assigned this keyword to all of the lexias that relate to color.

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colors

black--letter A, Heta?

white--silence, male, cold, age, letter E, Priam?

red--passion, love, female, letter I, Will?

blue--letter O

green--heath and healing, letter U,

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ethos

The traditional concept of ethos may be as good a place as any for feminist rhetoricians to begin an interrogation of mainstream, masculinist rhetoric. Ethos is simply not the same for men and women. Public men are respected. Caretaking, maternal women are respected. Credibility is firmly tied to gender. Credibility is deeply gendered. In order for women to gain credibility in any pursuit other than the traditional maternal duties, they must "do it like a man"--whatever "it" is--writing, speaking in public, running a business, doing research.

On the other hand, a public woman can play a maternal role (e.g., Mother Jones). If a woman takes on social problems from a maternal position, she is far more likely to be accepted.

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power

Landow writes, "Quibbling sharply contrasts with Joyce's Afternoon [. . .]. In contrast to Afternoon, which uses the resources of hypertext to assign even more authorial power to the reader, Quibbling tantalizes readers into wandering through its spaces in unexpected ways" (Hypertext 2.0, 205). Quibbling is seductive.

I'm not sure what Landow means by this. Later he says that Guyer allows more the reader control and power. It would make more sense for Landow to say that in Afternoon Joyce grants himself more power as the author.

Does "Lust" grant more power to the writer with its confusing narrative?

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affinity

The different couples in the text are linked by affinity. The reader often does not know who is being described because their lives are similar. The motif is affinity, not identity. Landow writes, "one perceives somewhat analogous situations, thus finding similarity, though not identity, in the lives of the different couples" (HT 2.0, 207). The fact that they are all artists in some way links them together.

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fractal

Fractal Design

Corbis.com
- - - - -
fractal3

- - - - -
fractal2

- - - - -
spiral
Spheres Floating in Whirlpool
Corbis.com

The spiral is an important motif in this text.

"Some of the oldest examples of human art are depictions of spirals, painted or carved into rock, often found in burial sites. Later, the Romans and Greeks used spirals as designs for vases and the columns in temples. The Celtic and Norse people were well known for the mysterious and repetitive designs found on their jewellery, clothing, weapons, objects of worship and everyday items. The Celts even painted spirals on their bodies with blue dye to intimidate enemies during battle. They also created forms of animals and plants twisting into impossible spirals, sometimes interlocking with other elements of the picture." (http://www.ancientspiral.com/spirals.htm)

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MomsSons
The mother-son relationship is a central motif for Guyer.
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cut text
When theorizing about quotidian and heroic narratives, it is important to not reinscribe oppressive gendered binaries; this is why, as Nancy Chodorow argued in 1978, men must be brought into traditionally feminine spheres. As I argued previously, we should not naively celebrate the discontinuous, interrupted quality of the traditional woman's work and life. By bringing men into "woman's sphere," we may place him in a more discontinuous environment or life-narrative.
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Rhodes & Sawday
"Print culture tended to produce a concept of the text as a relatively fixed and stable entity: the book. The great, multi-volumed, 'standard' editions of the late nineteenth and earlier twentieth centuries, for example . . . monuments to a belief in the stability of the printed word . . . The computer, through its possibilities of interactivity, 'play' and the creativity of hypertext, is now rapidly that idealization of stability, and returning us to a kind textuality which may more in common with the pre-print era" (11-12).

In a larger sense, secondary orality or electronic media in general is responsible for this change. Hypertext is an aspect of the post-print culture.

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similitude
"The early modern version of field theory and chaos theory is Montaigne's observation that 'toutes choses se tiennent par quelque similitude' (similitude binds everything together) . . . The paperworlds of the poets . . . derive imaginatively from a concept of the book of nature as a giant intertext of multiple connections and allusions" (Rhodes and Sawday 13).

Similitude is affinity. This is a radically different sense of arrangment than the alphabetic list, as modern encyclopedias are arranged. So the canon of arrangement mutates with technological developments. Hypertext goes back to similitude, as distinguished from the linear or serial plot of the novel. In a literary hypertext we read for similitude, or affinity, rather than cause-and-effect structures.

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SpiralDance

EXERCISE 42: THE DOUBLE SPIRAL

Ground and center. Visualize a double spiral. When you see it clearly, let it grow until you stand within it. and follow it inward, moving counterclockwise. R becomes a maze of high, clipped hedges, then a labyrinth of stone walls; its winding turns are the passageway to a hidden secret. As you move through the spiral, the world dissolves, form dissolves, until you are in the hidden heart where birth and death are one. The center of the spiral shines; it is the North Star, and the arms of the spiral are the Milky Way, a myriad of stars slowly revolving around the still center point. You are in Spiral Castle, at the back of the North Wind. Explore it in your imagination. See who you meet, what you learn. You are in the womb of the Goddess, floating free. Now feel yourself pushed and squeezed, moving out through the spiral, which is now the vaginal passage of rebirth. Move clockwise through the double spiral of your DNA. Now it becomes a whirlwind--fly with it. Let it become the twining tendril of a plant--a crystal--a shell--an orbiting electron. Time is a spiral--the cycles endlessly repeating, yet always moving. Know the spiral as the underlying form of all energy. As you emerge, let it return to its small. abstract, symbolic form. Thank it, and let it disappear. (http://www.tstonramp.com/~mauser/reclaiming/exercise.htm#double-spiral)

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3parts

Quibbling is organized in three sections: lake, moon, and prairie--each of which have association with the feminine principle.

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Starhawk

"The Spiral Dance: A Rebirth of The Ancient Religion Of The Great Goddess. (HarperSanFrancisco, 1979, 1989, 1999) This is the classic work that introduces the history, theology, and practice of Witchcraft and earth-based spirituality. It includes basic magical training and outlines for seasonal and moon rituals. It's been updated twice with new introductions, notes and commentary."

(http://www.starhawk.org/books.html)

Appendix C: Storyspace Assignments

Storyspace assignment #1

This assignment is designed to facilitate invention; it is done during the pre-writing stage of drafting an essay. At this point each student will have an essay topic and a research question.

1. Open Storyspace by going from Programs to Storyspace to Storyspace.

2. Double click in the map window to make a writing space. Use the number 1 as the writing space title. If necessary, review the *Storyspace User's Manual* for instructions on creating and naming writing spaces.

3. Go to *file* and *save as*. Using the filename *invent1.ssp*, save the Storyspace file onto your own diskette.

4. Go to *Document options* in the *file* pulldown menu and select the boxes to make your texts text links a different color (See Figure 1). Also find the *Preferences* under the *Edit* pulldown menu, and make sure the *keep windows open* option is deselected so that windows won't stack up (See Figure 2). Save regularly to make sure you don't accidentally lose all your work!

5. You should already have a research question for your essay. Write that question in writing space 1. After you've written the question, close the space by clicking the x in the upper right corner. The writing space will save automatically; however, it is a good idea to save your Storyspace file regularly to prevent accidental loss of your work.

6. Open another writing space and call it 2. In this space, write a tentative answer to your research question or a statement that might eventually lead to an answer. Close the space.

7. Continue the same process with other writing spacing, calling them 3, 4, 5, and so on. The idea is to write down brief thoughts as they come to you. Brainstorm, in other words.

8. Once you have several writing spaces, begin linking them together. Make sure every writing space has a link leading away from it so that there are no dead ends. If necessary, refer to the Storyspace User's Manual for instructions on linking writing spaces. Also see Figure 3.

9. When you reach the point at which you don't know what to write next, begin reading what you've written so far in the writing spaces. Click between the spaces and read until a new thought or connection comes to mind; then either add that idea to an existing writing space or write it in a new space.

10. Fifteen minutes before the end of class, begin arranging your writing spaces in chronological order beginning from the upper right corner (See Figure 4).

11. Select *export* under the file pulldown menu and export your Storyspace file to a text file (See Figure 5). Save your Storyspace file and close Storyspace.

12. Open the exported text file in WordPad; then copy and paste the text file into a Word file. This will give you a linear form of your Storyspace brainstorming, which you may use as a preliminary rough draft (or rough rough draft) of your essay.

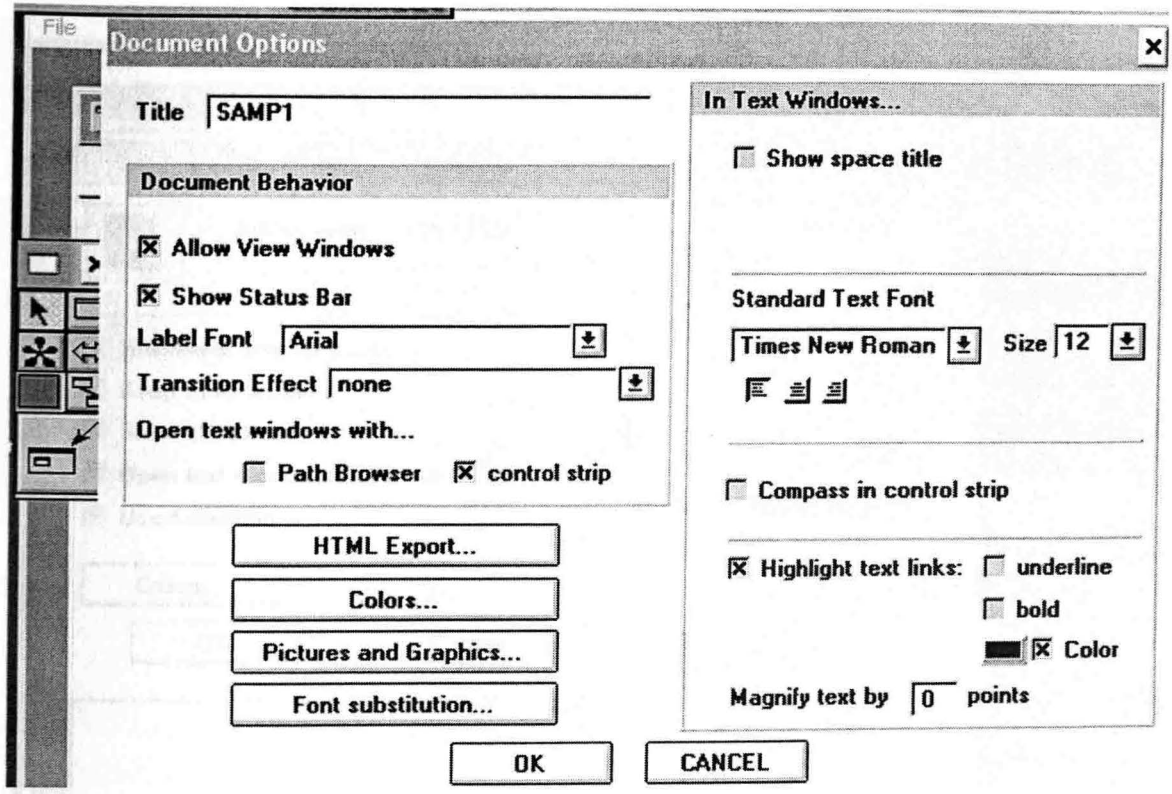

Figure 1: Storyspace Document Options

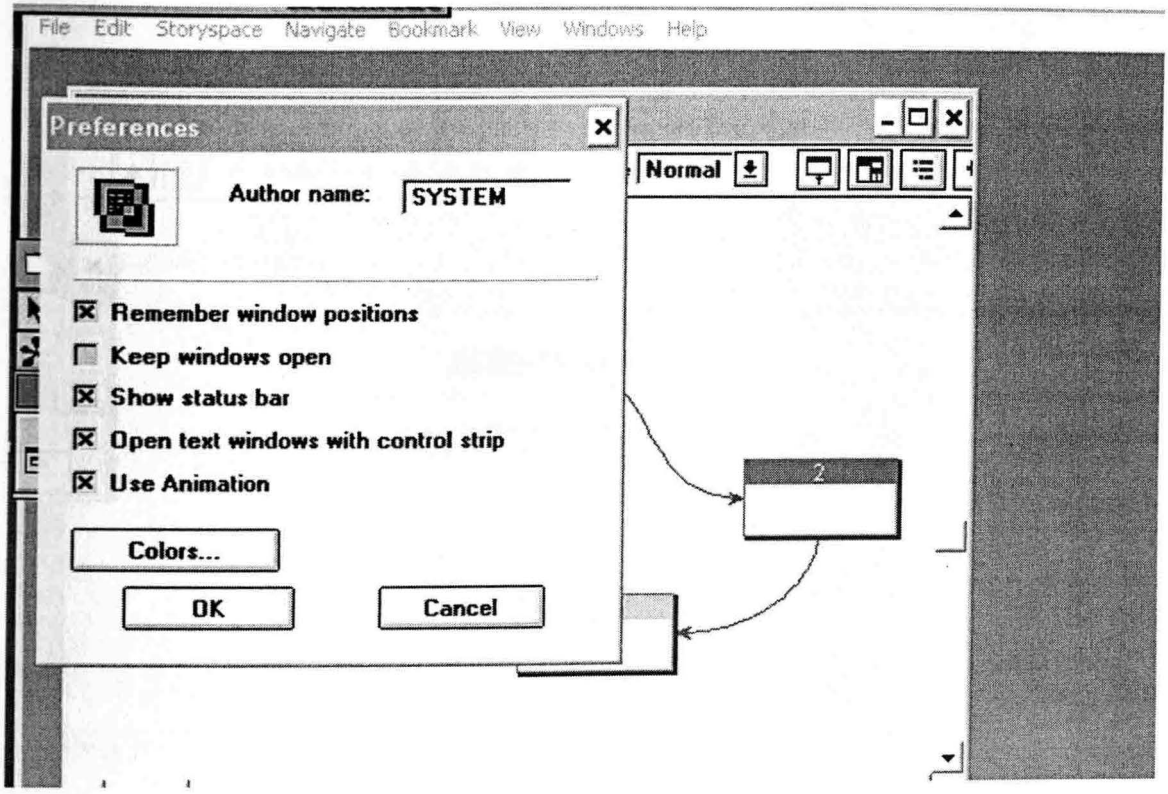

Figure 2: Storyspace Preferences

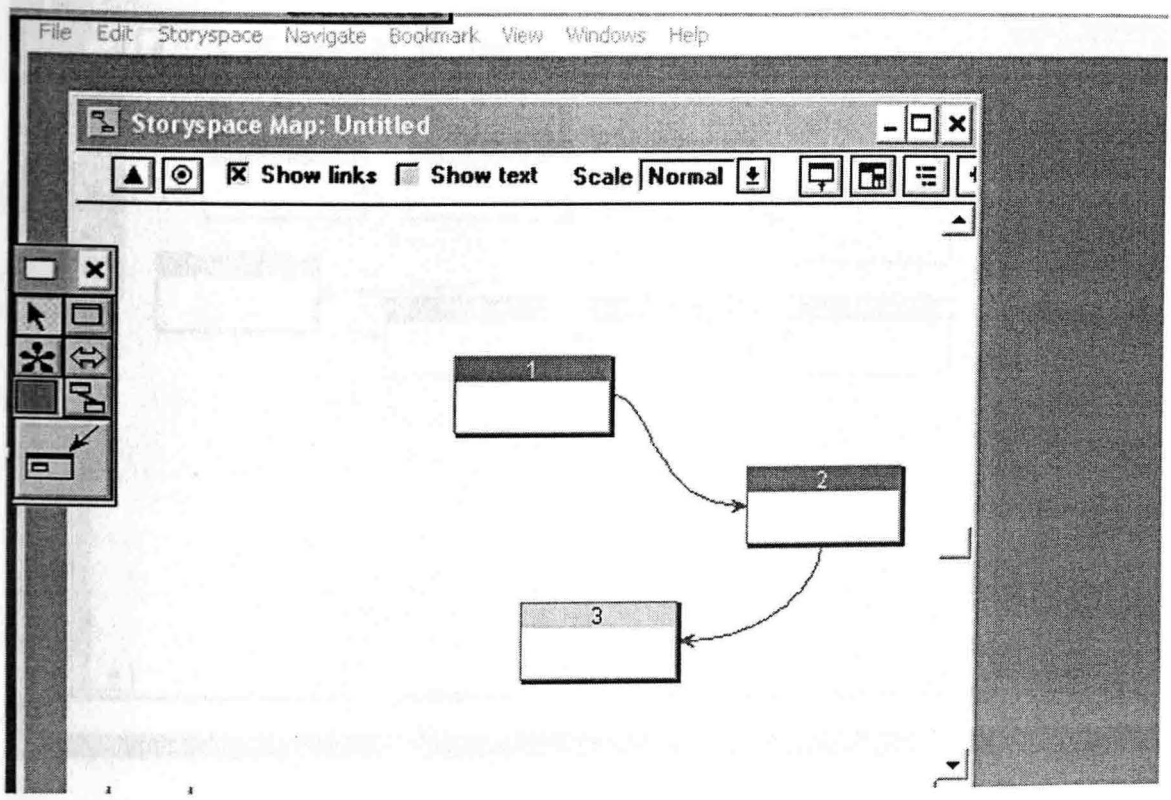

Figure 3: Linked Storyspace writing spaces

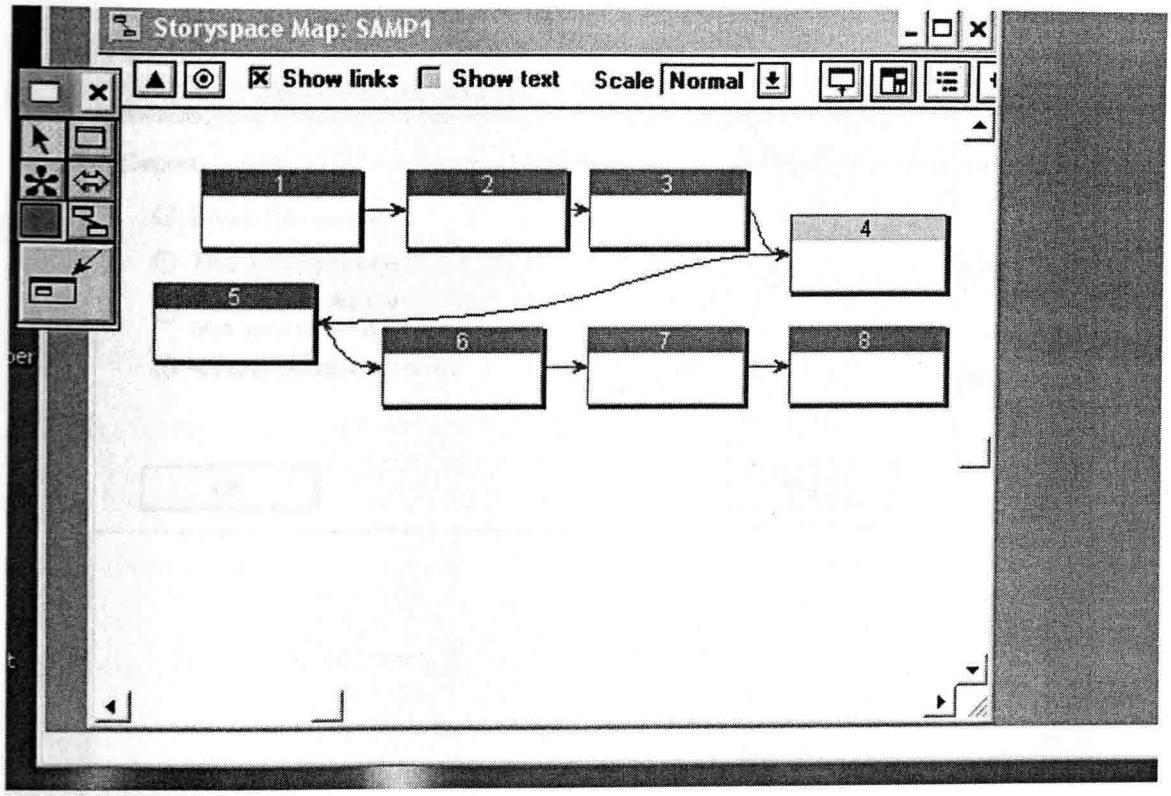

Figure 4: Storyspace map view with the first writing space in the upper left corner.

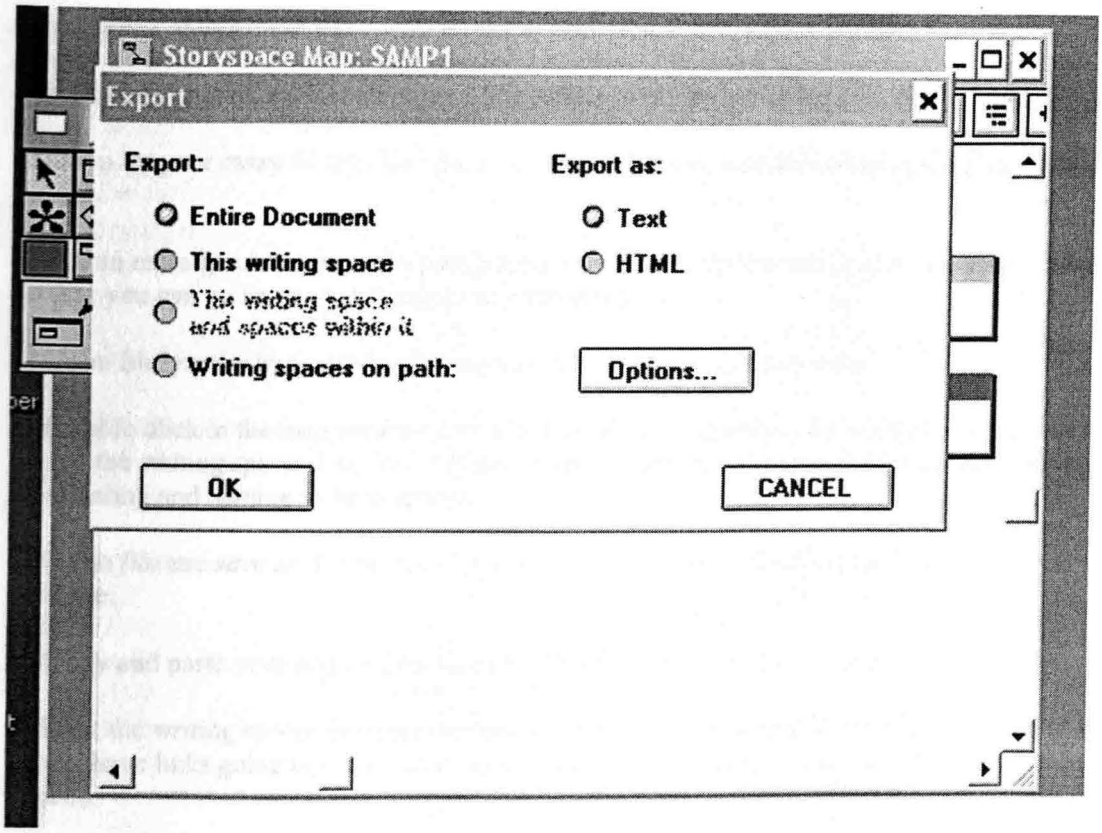

Figure 5: Storyspace Export Tool

Storyspace assignment #2

For this assignment, each student uses Storyspace to revise her or his own essay draft.

1. Open up your essay #1 file. Use *Save As* to save it under a different name. Close the first essay #1 file.

2. Put an extra space between the paragraphs; then divide up the paragraphs into smaller chunks so that you can make several Storyspace writing spaces.

3. Open Storyspace by going from Programs to Storyspace to Storyspace.

4. Double click in the map window to make enough writing spaces for each of your text chunks. Name the writing spaces 1, 2, 3, . . . If necessary, review the Storyspace Manual for instructions on creating and naming writing spaces.

5. Go to *file* and *save as*. Using the filename *revise1.ssp*, save the Storyspace file onto your own diskette.

6. Copy and paste your text chunks from the Word file into the Storyspace writing spaces.

7. Link the writing spaces together randomly—not in chronological order. Make sure all of the boxes have links going out from them as well as into them. Otherwise, you will have "dead end" spaces.

Remember that the *text* pulldown menu has to be in the *edit* mode to write in the space and in the *read* mode to move around through the links.

8. Start editing the text. Read the text in the spaces and see where you can change and/or add something. *Elaborate and complicate your ideas.*

9. Review the Storyspace Manual for the procedure for making texts links. Use text links to go off on tangents from a writing space. That is, if there is a word or phrase that you can expand upon or take in a new direction, highlight it and make a text link to a new space.

Remember to go to *Document options* in the *file* pulldown menu and select the boxes to make your texts text links a different color. Also find the *Preferences* under the *Edit* pulldown menu, and make sure the *keep windows open* option is deselected so that windows won't stack up. Save regularly to make sure you don't accidentally lose all your work!

10. Ten minutes before the end of class, select *export* under the *file* pulldown menu and export your Storyspace file to a text file. Save your Storyspace file and close Storyspace.

11. Open the exported text file in WordPad; then copy and paste the text file into a Word file. Save this Word file.

12. On your own time, work on arranging the text you've generated into a coherent linear form.

Storyspace assignment #3

For this assignment, the instructor may direct the students to an online text that can be copied and pasted into a word processing file. When I gave this assignment, I chose to convert a student essay from a different section of the same composition course to HTML format and put it online. Of course, I first removed the student's name and any other identifying marks. Below are the instructions I gave:

1. Go to www7.twu.edu/~G_11clark/sample.htm

2. Copy and paste the document into a new Word file.

3. Put an extra space between paragraphs; then divide up the paragraphs into smaller chunks so that you can make about nine Storyspace writing spaces. Be sure to split up the second paragraph since it's the longest.

4. Open Storyspace by going from Programs to Storyspace to Storyspace.

5. Double click in the map window to make enough writing spaces for each of your text chunks. Label the writing spaces 1-9.

6. Go to *file* and *save as*. Using the filename *blowup.ssp*, save the file onto your diskette.

7. Copy and paste your text chunks from the Word file into the Storyspace writing spaces.

8. Link the writing spaces together so that when you click on them (or hit enter) you will go around in a circle. In other words, connect the last space to the first.

Remember that the *text* pulldown menu has to be in the *edit* mode to write in the space and in the *read* mode to move around through the links.

9. Start editing the text. Read the text in the spaces and see where you can change and/or add something. This essay draft needs a lot of elaboration and complication; it is quite undeveloped at this stage.

10. Use text links to go off on tangents from a writing space. That is, if there is a word that you can expand upon or take in a new direction, highlight it and make a text link to a new space.

Remember to go to *document options* in the *file* pulldown menu to make your texts links a different color. Also under the *edit* pulldown menu, make sure the *keep windows open* option is deselected. Save regularly to make sure you don't accidentally lose all your work.

Rationale: This assignment is designed to give you practice in blowing up an essay draft into small pieces so that you can play with the pieces to rework the draft. It is easier to work with small sections of a draft than to tackle the whole draft at once or to try to make comprehensive changes, especially if you are working with a lengthy draft.

Storyspace Assignment #4

Open your copy of J. Yellowlees Douglas's "I Have Said Nothing."

In the map view, create a new writing space and title it "Commentary." In this space you can put writing spaces containing your commentary on Douglas's hypertext.

Begin reading the hypertext. When an idea comes to mind—the kind of idea that you might write in the margins of a print text—add it to the hypertext. There are a couple of ways to do this: You may either write directly in the writing space or create a commentary space to write in. Remember that the *text* pulldown menu has to be in the *edit* mode to write in the space and in the *read* mode to move around through the links. Also, if necessary, review the Storyspace User's Manual for instruction on creating text links.

If you chose to write directly within an existing writing space, such as under Douglas's text, it is a good idea to mark your text with the word "NOTE." Typically, I use this method to write brief comments or annotations, and I use commentary spaces for more lengthy comments. If you create a commentary space, which should be nested within the larger Commentary space, you will need to make a text link from Douglas's text to this new space. You may also make one or more links from a commentary space to Douglas's text or to your own commentary.

As a third option, you may use the note tool (the asterisk icon on the tool palette). The note tool is convenient because Storyspace automatically links notes to and from text. However, when dealing with someone else's hypertext, the note tool can create confusion because the author may also have created notes, and there is no way to differentiate your notes from the author's notes, unless you mark the text with NOTE or something. You also have no control over where Storyspace places notes.

Rationale: The rationale for writing in someone else's hypertext is that it helps you to read actively, or to become a reader-writer (or wreater). Ultimately, the hypertext should become your text rather than being controlled by the named author. Your hypertext commentary may also serve as the beginning of a critical essay.

Appendix D: A Sampling of Student Comments on Storyspace Hypertext

These comments were written by students in a Fall, 2001 first-year composition course, English 1023: Composition and Literature II. I have drawn from two sources: an assigned essay on Shelley Jackson's *Patchwork Girl* and an end-of-semester student evaluation of the course. I originally presented these comments in hypertext format at the *Annual Symposium in Rhetoric of the Federation of North Texas Area Universities* in Denton, TX, February 8, 2002. Aside from correcting spelling and minor proofreading errors, I present the comments below as written by the students.

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Hypertext more closely resembles the type of writing I am involved with on a frequent basis. I may use the hypertext format in some of my future writings because of the randomness and freedom of it. Although the introduction to hypertext has improved my creativity skills, it did not improve my essay writing skills because it does not utilize the typical format.

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The introduction of hypertext was an unexpected bonus in this English class. Never had I heard of such a thing, but after playing around with it, hypertext seems so logical and basic. [. . .] My exposure to hypertext will greatly aid in my method of composing because now I can attempt to write in a less traditional manner.

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Patchwork Girl showed me that all the random thoughts of writing can be brought together. Although I don't believe I would ever write anything using Storyspace, I know that I will utilize it to formulate my ideas [. . .] The story itself caused me to delve deeply into the many facets that comprise everyone, and helped me find a sense of inner peace amongst the chaos of life.

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When I was first introduced to hypertext, I had a complete and total aversion to it. I abhorred the chaos of it, and fought to find some order. That's me. I must have order, schedules, post-it notes. *Patchwork Girl* changed my attitude--towards hypertext writing and the way I walk through life.

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There is an order to *Patchwork Girl*, just as there is an order to life. This class, and that story, assisted me in seeing that it doesn't have to be a succinct, military spit-and-polish type of order. Thank you so much for that.

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Throughout the semester I was a bit wary of hypertext and I didn't enjoy it very much until we got to *Patchwork Girl*. I believe the last paper was my best. It helped to develop and grow in my writing more than any other paper. [. . .] There were so many hidden meanings and opinions, that the possibilities were endless. It made we think about the way we read books and the way our minds work and accept the norm. There were so many hidden meanings and metaphors that, like an endless hypertext, I could write an endless paper.

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What I enjoyed most was learning about hypertext. This was completely foreign to me, yet I learned how to appreciate what was initially a challenge to me.

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At first attempting to read the hypertext story we were given and then later required to write about appeared to disregard all the rules we had learned in the first weeks of the class. It certainly was not closed-form writing; there was not an easily defined path to reading the material; the old-before-new concept seemed to go out the window; and forget about any transitional words or phrases. But just as the first half of the semester had fallen into place, this concept and style of writing would also fall into place. Much like hypertext itself, the class discussions complemented by the in-class writings pulled the pieces together. [. . .] In the end, learning about hypertext provided another tool to pull together haphazard thoughts and later fashion them into a meaningful paper.

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I have come to appreciate hypertext writing, although I didn't understand it too well [. . .] I think it is an interesting way to approach fiction, but I think I'll stick to print.

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Hypertext has broadened my understanding of different types of writing techniques. Before this class, I had never been exposed to Storyspace or any kind of hypertext writing. *Patchwork Girl* gave me a whole new world to experience. I enjoy reading the stories and using my imagination to put the story together.

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Reading hypertext was something different. Some might say that hypertext is other than "normal." [. . .] I have a new perspective on writing as well as reading.

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I really enjoyed working with hypertext. Reading *Patchwork Girl* really opened my mind to explore the different ways of writing and reading. Working with hypertext kept me reading to understand what was happening. Until I read a hypertext story, I thought that stories were written in a specific order. Hypertext does not have a specific beginning, middle, or end. This is why I was mentally active while reading a hypertext story.

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This class has changed my perspective on the subject of English in many ways. [. . .] When the class first started and we read hypertext, I fought it because it was new and different, but also because it was reading. I have never enjoyed reading books [. . .] When I read the hypertext the passages were short so they kept my focus, and the stories, although often confusing, were easier to understand from one space to another. I didn't have to keep returning to the previous space to comprehend the story, which I have to do when reading a print book. I know I don't have hypertext totally figured out, but this is one reading style that I'm willing to work with.

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At first I was not very keen on hypertext. It is so disorderly. But once I started to read more and more of the story, and when I would try explaining hypertext to my friends, I realized how interesting and unique it is. I ended up enjoying the story, even though I am nowhere near finished with it. I even started to enjoy it more after writing an essay on it.

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In hypertext, the reader is asked to engage her brain. The reader must think and organize each word. There is no "down time" when reading hypertext. Even if something does not make sense at first, it might be explained in more detail in other spaces; therefore, the reader cannot throw out any information because it may be needed again.

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The first noticeable change in my writing was the complication of my ideas. The use of Storyspace allowed me to take a single idea and continue to expand outward. It helped me to brainstorm freely without immediately being forced fit those thoughts into a rigid outline. I could discard freely, add freely, and organize my thoughts into different views, adding structure to a mass of ideas.

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I really do thank my teacher for introducing me to different things like hypertext. This really encouraged me to think deeper. I feel totally embarrassed saying this, but I did not even know that hypertext existed until it was introduced in this class. This class not only helped me with English skills, it taught me that there are other things in the world besides print books that I can read.

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A hypertext is a puzzle. We are like Patchwork Girl when reading the story, moving around not knowing if came from the beginning or the end, just like Patchwork Girl lives her life. [. . .] In hypertext the beginning and end are unclear; you may begin reading in the middle and jump around to the beginning and then to the end--constantly "hop scotching" around, trying to settle the pieces and form and understanding of the hypertext as a whole.

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Beginning with skepticism about hypertext and especially *Patchwork Girl*, I have come to appreciate how the two link together. Shelley Jackson created *Patchwork Girl* with incredible imagination and skill that would not achieve its purpose and goal if printed as a print book.

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Shelley Jackson's *Patchwork Girl* is reminiscent of a story written by another Shelley, that being Mary Shelley's Frankenstein. In both texts, a monster is envisioned in the writer's mind and is physically created from scratch. However, hypertext creates a whole new dimension for "monster," allowing the reader to participate in her creation rather than just reading about it on the printed page.

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As the reader sees the hypertext story as pieces to a puzzle that may never end, the basis for reading the story may change. Instead of rushing through the links to find out what happens at the

end, the reader may stop and try to understand the story better. As the reader comes to understand the different qualities of Patchwork Girl, she may not be so quick to put her in a box.

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Patchwork Girl is not really like a quilt at all, but more like the act of quilting. Quilting is not something generally done by oneself, just as Patchwork Girl is not one person.

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Patchwork Girl is every woman in the world. We are a multitude of personalities [. . .] There are different situations in which we are different people. We are the culmination of all our pasts and presents.

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These tattered pieces and scraps of thoughts have also been compared to the individual pieces of a patchwork quilt. Quilts historically have been important to the feminist tradition. It is a valued art form and a non-patriarchal way to record domestic history. In an art world dominated by men, the quilt stands as a uniquely feminine work. Quilts are often pieced together to symbolically portray various moments in a period of time. These pieces speak something a little different to everyone who encounters them, much like no two people will ever find the same meaning in *Patchwork Girl*, nor will they take the same paths through the text.

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I became a stronger writer when writing about hypertext because it allowed me to search for answers on a level deeper than I had before.

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Using Storyspace after writing the first draft of my essay allowed me to develop and incorporate ideas I never considered before. [. . .] This class and Storyspace have allowed me to more creatively and intelligently expand the scope and depth of my writing.

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